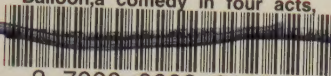


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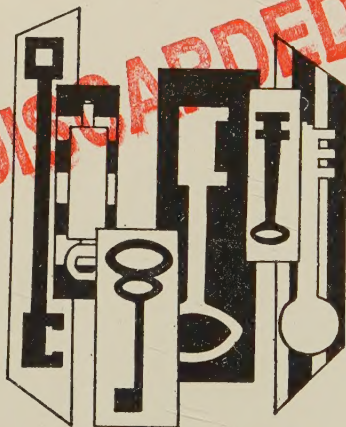
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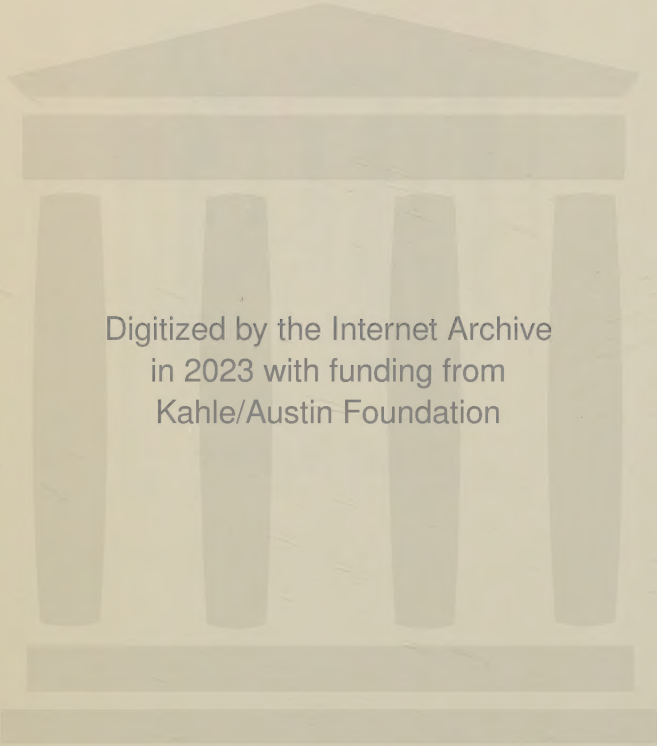
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BALLOON



*Poetry and Plays by*

PADRAIC COLUM

CREATURES

DRAMATIC LEGENDS AND OTHER POEMS

WILD EARTH AND OTHER POEMS

THREE PLAYS: THE FIDDLER'S HOUSE, THE  
LAND, AND THOMAS MUSKERRY  
MOGU, THE WANDERER



COLUMBIA, NO.

# Balloony

A COMEDY IN FOUR ACTS

BY  
PADRAIC COLUM

NEW YORK  
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY  
1929

18139

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Samuel French, 25 West 45th St., New York City

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TO MY FRIENDS OF THE OLD DAYS,  
DUDLEY AND MARY DIGGES



The action takes place in MEGALAPOLIS.

## ACT ONE

A Section of a Square.

## ACT TWO

The Café of the Hotel Daedalus.

## ACT THREE

The Hall of Palms in the Hotel Daedalus.

## ACT FOUR

The Playroom in the Hotel Daedalus.

The Roof Garden of the Hotel Daedalus.

## PEOPLE IN THE PLAY

### IN THE SQUARE

CASPAR, A MAN WITH A TELESCOPE  
A LABOR-UNION OFFICIAL  
TWO MEMBERS OF THE BROTHERHOOD OF BASEMENT WORKERS  
TWO NEWSPAPER REPORTERS  
A YOUNG MAN  
A SCRUB-WOMAN  
A GIRL  
REDVYN, THE ARCHITECT OF THE HOTEL DAEDALUS

### IN THE HOTEL

CASPAR  
JUANA FERN, THE OPERA SINGER  
THE ATLANTEAN AMBASSADOR  
A SPORTING GENTLEMAN  
THE MINISTER OF WAR  
MR. CIRCULUS, THE NEWSPAPER MAGNATE  
A GIRL ATTENDANT IN THE 'CAFÉ DAEDALUS  
TWO WAITRESSES (CHINESE)  
SOME DANCING COUPLES  
A LADY WITH LORGNETTES  
LILLIAN, A YOUNG SOCIETY WOMAN  
THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE HOTEL DAEDALUS  
MARK FRANKS, A FINANCIER  
ANDRUS, A YOUNG BUSINESS MAN  
COHEN MULDOON, THE PRIZE-FIGHTER  
MISS LEILA ROMERANTZ, THE CINEMA STAR  
SALVADOR, A PROFESSIONAL DANCER  
PARAS VEKA, A YOUNG GIRL  
A VALET  
GLOCK THE CLOWN  
ELEVATOR MAN  
REDVYN, THE ARCHITECT OF THE HOTEL DAEDALUS  
TWO NEWSPAPER REPORTERS

## THE FIRST ACT

*A section of a Square in Megalapolis. Back is a towering Hotel on which splotches of light begin to appear. A young man is beside a brass Telescope that is mounted on a stand; there is a rather intent look in his face. Three men enter. The first is evidently a Labor-union official; the other two are workers.*

OFFICIAL

I know what you want. You want to get up from the basement. You want to go up, up, up in the Hotel. You want to hand me in your cards from the Brotherhood of the Basement Workers of the Hotel Daedalus.

FIRST MAN

You've said it. Here's my card.

SECOND MAN

Here's mine.

OFFICIAL

I feel downhearted about this. It seems that no sooner do I initiate men into the Brotherhood of the Basement Workers of the Hotel Daedalus than they want to leave the basement . . .

FIRST MAN

Wouldn't you?

OFFICIAL

I was never in the basement, Brother. I'm organizer of the Basement Workers . . .

SECOND MAN

Well, we're handing in our cards.

[ 1 ]



## BALLOON

OFFICIAL

Just think it over, Brothers—just think it over. The pay is as good down below as it is up above . . .

SECOND MAN

It's as good.

FIRST MAN

We don't see anyone but the Basement Workers where we are.

SECOND MAN

If we were up where the Elevator is going . . .  
(*He indicates the rising Elevator in the Hotel.*)

OFFICIAL

(*Heatedly*) You'd be able to have a look at the big fellows who are telling the world that they run the earth . . .

FIRST MAN

Buntt who flew across the Antarctic . . .

SECOND MAN

Beltt who has explored the valleys of the Sargasso Sea . . .

FIRST MAN

Crockett who has come over to raise five hundred millions on his interests . . .

SECOND MAN

Murmura, the Dictator of Tartary . . .

FIRST MAN

They are all staying in the Hotel Daedalus . . .

OFFICIAL

And they never come down into the basement! And so you want to go up to where they are and breathe their air for a while! I'm not going to give you release. You're in

## BALLOON

the Brotherhood of the Basement Workers of the Hotel Daedalus, and you're going to stay in it for this term, anyhow . . .

FIRST MAN

All right! I'll pay my dues into your Brotherhood. But I'm going up . . .

SECOND MAN

I'm going up, and I won't pay any more dues into the Brotherhood . . .

OFFICIAL

This is a real Brotherhood and no mistake—the Brotherhood of the Basement Workers of the Hotel Daedalus! Do as you like—I'm through! But I don't want you to say anything to the Newspaper Reporters that are coming this way.

FIRST MAN

Newspaper Reporters . . .

OFFICIAL

They ask questions and print them with pictures. But not a word about the Brotherhood . . .

*(Two reporters come on carrying cameras; one is evidently an old hand; the other looks a beginner.)*

OFFICIAL

*(To First Reporter)* Say, Chief, what's on your mind? What's going on?

FIRST REPORTER

Cohen Muldoon, the Prize-fighter, has been given the freedom of the City.

OFFICIAL

Is that so? Cohen Muldoon!

## BALLOON

SECOND REPORTER

And he's coming to stay at the Hotel Daedalus. Look at the camera-men on the steps waiting for him! Look at the motor-cycle police going this way and that way! His arrival is expected any minute.

FIRST REPORTER

He's not the only one that's expected. Leila Romerantz, the motion-picture actress . . .

THE THREE MEN

Leila Romerantz . . .

FIRST REPORTER

She's coming to the Hotel, too. And what she's going to do is news! She's going up in a Balloon from the Roof Garden of the Hotel Daedalus to-night!

FIRST MAN

Balloon!

SECOND MAN

Roof Garden!

OFFICIAL

Leila Romerantz!

FIRST REPORTER

Well, that's what's on, if you want to know.

MAN AT TELESCOPE

Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!

SECOND REPORTER

Say, wouldn't that make a good headline—Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!

FIRST REPORTER

You're just in on the job—isn't that so?

SECOND REPORTER

That's so.

## BALLOON

FIRST REPORTER

Then I'll tell you something. You think that would look pretty on a page—Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas. But you're wrong there. You've got to get a verb into the headline. "Extinct Volcanoes threaten Empty Seas!" There you are. That means something!

SECOND REPORTER

Sure. I get that.

FIRST REPORTER

The verb—it's the king-pin in the headline.

*(The two Workers and the Official are together. Cards are handed to him. An argument seems to go on.)*

OFFICIAL

Here are some other workers out of the Hotel.

FIRST WORKERS

Upstairs workers.

OFFICIAL

Look at them! Do you think they're any the better off for having graduated upstairs?

FIRST REPORTER

*(Indicating the man at the Telescope)* Who is he—the Professor?

OFFICIAL

Caspar is his name. He's been round here for a while.

SECOND REPORTER

What about getting a story from him?

FIRST REPORTER

What kind of story do you mean?

SECOND REPORTER

"Obscure Telescope-operator tells of his Vigils."

## BALLOON

### FIRST REPORTER

Forget it. The day for that sort of thing has gone by. Besides, . . . well, with all that's on to-night, and a Printer's strike looming, we've no room for obscure people.

*(Three more workers from the Hotel enter—there is a smart young man and a slow old scrub-woman; with them, but distinctly showing that she is not of them, is a young and pretty girl, evidently a manicurist. They come near the Telescope.)*

### CASPAR

Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas! Here you are! For one silver you can see the enormous Mountains. You can see the Volcanoes with craters that are absolutely stupendous—miles and miles across. And then the Seas! Absolutely empty. No atmosphere, you see. No more remarkable spectacle can be offered.

*(Attracted by his address, the young and pretty girl moves towards Caspar. The scrub-woman gets nearer.)*

### SCRUB-WOMAN

Is this a good time to look through, Mister?

### CASPAR

It's a very good time. The atmosphere is clear. No clouds, as you can see.

### SCRUB-WOMAN

I often thought I would look through it. What would I see?

### CASPAR

The Mountains, the Seas, the Volcanoes of the Moon.  
*(She hesitates about making payment and the Reporters intervene.)*

## BALLOON

FIRST REPORTER

I'm Inquiring Camera-man. Every night I have a question to ask. I print it with the answer I've got and the picture of the person who gives the answer. I've got to get some one in this crowd to answer my question.

YOUNG MAN

Will it be in your paper that you asked one of us?

FIRST REPORTER

Yes. Midnight Gazette. Any time after midnight. This is the question that Inquiring Camera-man wants answered to-night. What do you think of the freedom of the City being given to Cohen Muldoon, the Prize-fighter?

SCRUB-WOMAN

His suite is on the corridor that I work along.

YOUNG MAN

She's been telling us that all day.

SCRUB-WOMAN

It is on the corridor I work along.

FIRST REPORTER

(*To Scrub-woman*) Have you ever seen Cohen Muldoon, the Prize-fighter?

SCRUB-WOMAN

No, Mister, I never saw him.

FIRST REPORTER

Well, that's the question.

SCRUB-WOMAN

Does he get that suite free?

YOUNG MAN

It doesn't mean that he gets anything free. It's only an honour. But should a prize-fighter get an honour like that from the City—that's the question.

## BALLOON

OFFICIAL

It's like electing him to something—see.

SCRUB-WOMAN

(*Thoughtfully*) I'd say it was all right.

FIRST REPORTER

Scrub-woman in Hotel Daedalus says that public does well in honouring Prize-fighter, he, in several ways, representing populace, or, at least, popular feelings. I needn't take your picture. We have a cut that will do.

SCRUB-WOMAN

(*Gratified*) Will I see it in the paper?

FIRST REPORTER

Yes. Midnight Gazette. No other news-sheet.

SECOND REPORTER

Say, I've got an idea. I think it would make a stunt.

FIRST REPORTER

What's the idea?

SECOND REPORTER

Well, we ask one of the crowd here a question, and we print the answer that's given us. Suppose we got one of them to ask us a question, printed it, and had it answered in the paper—by an expert, perhaps. It would create a lot of interest. It would show the mind of the populace—what they're really thinking about—see!

FIRST REPORTER

Not bad. Go ahead.

SECOND REPORTER

(*To crowd who are now all grouped together with the exception of Caspar who stands Left with his Telescope.*)

Is there any question that any of you would like to ask?



## BALLOON

Anything that you are interested in knowing about? I'll have it printed in the paper with your name to it and your picture above it, and have it answered the next day. What about it?

*(The young and pretty girl comes forward.)*

YOUNG MAN

Mae, the Manicure-girl, would like to know . . .

MAE

Say, I'm not with your crowd; I don't have to talk to you.

SECOND REPORTER

What question would you like to have printed in the paper and answered for you?

MAE

What do the rich people in the Hotel—I mean the real rich people—do with all the money they have?

YOUNG MAN

That question is just silly.

MAE

Well, ask a question that isn't silly, you.

SECOND REPORTER

How about you? Let's have one from you?

YOUNG MAN

*(Who evidently fancies himself as an intellectual)* Why do we have Colleges teaching History when all History is past, anyhow?

PEOPLE IN CROWD

It will take a lot of study to answer that question. They'll put it on the front page.

OFFICIAL

I want to ask a question . . .

## BALLOON

FIRST REPORTER

Just a moment! Just a moment! We're making the round, you see.

OFFICIAL

Yes, and we know the question you're not going to be let print.

FIRST REPORTER

If you know it you needn't ask that question.

SECOND REPORTER

(*To Scrub-woman*) It's your turn now, lady.

SCRUB-WOMAN

I don't know anything . . .

SECOND REPORTER

But you'd like to know, wouldn't you? Now what question would you like to ask?

SCRUB-WOMAN

I'd like to ask . . .

SECOND REPORTER

I'm ready.

SCRUB-WOMAN

I'd like to ask why people don't make shoes that people can walk in any more.

PEOPLE IN CROWD

That's good. And why don't they make bread that tastes like bread? And where did this psychology that they're testing us with come from? Who gets all the fines collected in the police courts?

SECOND REPORTER

(*To Caspar*) Your turn now, Professor.

CASPAR

I think you'll feel that this question . . .

## BALLOON

SECOND REPORTER

Your question . . .

CASPAR

. . . is an important one.

SECOND REPORTER

Oh, you needn't mind if it is. We'll have it answered for you.

CASPAR

Do you think you will?

SECOND REPORTER

Oh, positively.

CASPAR

Is a man born a hero, or does he become a hero by doing heroic things?

SECOND REPORTER

I don't get that, Professor.

CASPAR

In other words—what is it to be a hero?

SECOND REPORTER

Still I don't get your question.

CASPAR

It's like this: take the case of the man they've given the freedom of the City to—Cohen Muldoon. Take him as an example of what I mean. He didn't fight because he's a fighter—he's a fighter because he has fought.

FIRST REPORTER

Got anything on Cohen Muldoon?

CASPAR

No. I just brought him up as an example of what I mean.

SECOND REPORTER

And your question is . . .?

## BALLOON

CASPAR

What is it to be a hero? And by a hero I mean any one who is remarkable in any line. Is a man born that, or does he become that by taking advantage of some opportunity that comes his way?

SECOND REPORTER

You mean that one can't do anything, can't become anything, if the opportunity isn't offered?  
(*The crowd is interested.*)

CASPAR

That's what I mean. The bravest and most resolute man might stand on this pavement for years, and if nothing happened here, why he could do nothing to show his courage and resolution. But if something did happen he could do something. And this is what I mean: By just doing that he would become something. A man becomes a hero by doing heroic things. A man becomes remarkable by doing remarkable things.

SECOND REPORTER

There's something in it. I'll print your question. I'll take a picture of you now, Professor.  
(*Second Reporter gets ready to take photograph of him. Caspar is excited and pleased.*)

FIRST REPORTER

(*Coming between Caspar and camera*) Just a moment!  
What about it?

CASPAR

What about what?

FIRST REPORTER

Your unnoted bravery. Ever stopped a hold-up hereabouts?

## BALLOON

CASPAR

No . . . I can't say that I have.

FIRST REPORTER

Well, what deed of bravery were you talking about?

CASPAR

I wasn't talking about deeds of bravery I have done.  
Listen! It's like this . . .

*(Suddenly there is the rattle of motor-cycles, the sounding of motor-horns.)*

FIRST REPORTER

Cohen Muldoon is coming!

SECOND REPORTER

Or Leila Romerantz!

*(The Reporters and the crowd turn round towards the Hotel. And now there are explosions from flash-light cameras.)*

FIRST REPORTER

On the steps of the Hotel!

*(The Second Reporter picks up the camera which he was about to use. All rush off towards the Hotel, leaving Caspar making gestures to detain Second Reporter.)*

CASPAR

*(Walking up and down and making gestures)* My name in the paper! My picture, too! And now the chance has gone! They have all gone over to the Hotel Daedalus, and there is nothing to bring them back here! *(A clock strikes.)* Another night! And no opportunity will come to get me out of this obscurity! Not even my name in the paper once! And not my picture—not my picture! My God! Will it be always like this? From this Square to my

## BALLOON

back-bedroom; from my back-bedroom to a library; from a library to this Square! And no opportunity coming my way! If I could only go where they are going now, Cohen Muldoon and Leila Romerantz—into the Hotel Daedalus! There is the place where all opportunities are! The masters of the world are there! God! I would sell this Telescope for a day or a night in the Hotel Daedalus! Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!

*(He says this last sentence as a Man comes along. The Man is arrested by the sentence. He is still young, and he looks as if he had great achievements back of him.)*

THE MAN

What did you say?

CASPAR

Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas! On the Moon, sir.

THE MAN

What you said chimed with something that was in my mind. Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!

CASPAR

Would you like to look, sir? A silver. That is all, sir. *(He adjusts Telescope, takes money Man gives him. The Man looks.)*

THE MAN

How near—how dreadfully near they are! Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!

CASPAR

Not many people think of them as being near, sir.

THE MAN

But they are—dreadfully near! Did you ever think that

## BALLOON

these buildings around you were dead like something on the Moon?

CASPAR

Did I ever think that? Oh, no, sir.

THE MAN

Something like that was in my mind when I heard you say, "Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!"

CASPAR

Oh, but look at the Hotel Daedalus, sir.

THE MAN

Yes, I'm looking at it. (*He turns round and looks at the Hotel.*) Oh, of course, people can dance in the Hotel Daedalus, and have music in the Hotel Daedalus, and have excitement of every kind in the Hotel Daedalus. But can any one be happy in it? Or in any of the buildings around?

CASPAR

Opportunity of every kind is in the Hotel Daedalus.

THE MAN

Yes. Amongst them the opportunity of going up in a Balloon.

CASPAR

Going up in a Balloon?

THE MAN

Going up in a Balloon! From the Roof Garden! Tonight! I'd like to ask you if you knew why we want to go above the earth. People used to be happy upon the earth, close to the earth, amongst growing things. And just now, when this Balloon flight was being talked about, I felt that they were happy, the people who were still close to the earth.



## BALLOON

CASPAR

I beg your pardon, sir. Who are you?

THE MAN

Redvyn is my name. I am the architect of the Hotel Daedalus.

CASPAR

The architect of the Hotel Daedalus!

REDVYN

But perhaps in spite of being the architect of the Hotel Daedalus, I do not belong altogether to the. Children of Daedalus. That is what I am going to find out, perhaps. Daedalus is in Greek Mythology. I named my Hotel from him, knowing that he built the palaces for the Kings of Crete, that he invented wings for people to fly with, and that he is the father of all who build great structures, and compound the elements, and make plans for the subjugation of the earth. All the people in the Hotel Daedalus are his children. They are very different from the men and women who had places on the un-built-on earth, who had memories, and who could be happy in their memories. I do not like them any more, the Children of Daedalus, they and their Balloons. But you, I expect, have quite a good time in this place. You have no distractions and you have an impressive offering for people.

CASPAR

And I have something to look at. I mean your Hotel, sir. Look, look there!

REDVYN

The Elevator Shaft?

CASPAR

The Elevator is rising. Look! Up, up, up, and up it goes!

## BALLOON

Who are in the car, do you suppose? Women with soft-furred wraps around them, their faces delicately rouged . . .

REDVYN

Yes. They are in it.

CASPAR

A renowned opera singer. A diplomat. A famous general. A young girl with pearls around her throat and at her breast a bunch of white violets . . . Oh, sir, the whole of the world is in your Hotel. I watch it from here, sir.

REDVYN

The Elevator is rising again.

CASPAR

Where, do you suppose, it stops now?

REDVYN

At the Minoan Ballroom.

CASPAR

The Minoan Ballroom! I shall remember that. Up, up, up, it goes.

REDVYN

It stops now at the Hall of Palms.

CASPAR

And now it rises again. Where, now, does it stop?

REDVYN

At the floor of the private suites.

CASPAR

And now it rises, in a beautiful perpendicular, straight up to the Roof Garden.

REDVYN

Do you watch it descend?

## BALLOON

CASPAR

No. It just descends.

REDVYN

And so, watching the Elevator Shaft, you do not think on the Mountains, the Extinct Volcanoes, and the Empty Seas. In my present mood I should think of them. Suppose I make you an offer?

*(Caspar takes up a pair of field-glasses which have been hanging on the Telescope stand. He offers them tentatively.)*

REDVYN

No. I don't need these field-glasses. *(Caspar puts them in his pocket.)* I should like to stay here for a while. I should like to look at the Mountains, the Extinct Volcanoes, and the Empty Seas, and look from them to the buildings around. Suppose I bought your Telescope?

CASPAR

Bought it! For how much? Could I go into the Hotel with what you'd give for it?

REDVYN

Yes. I will give you a thousand silvers. The Telescope shall be taken care of. If I go away I'll leave it in charge of the policeman who is about. A thousand silvers? Is that right?

CASPAR

*(As he takes the notes that Redvyn gives him)* You are giving me more than notes for a thousand silvers. You are giving me opportunities, sir. And now I can go into the Hotel Daedalus! Past the commissionaires at the door, past the waiters! Yes, I can do it. A man becomes a hero by

## BALLOON

doing heroic things. I am going into the Hotel Daedalus!  
This is the night of my life, sir!

REDVYN

Well, if you feel that way about it, good luck to you!  
(*More lights flash out from the Hotel. Caspar goes to it.*)

REDVYN

Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!

END OF FIRST ACT

## THE SECOND ACT

*The Café of the Hotel Daedalus. The entrance is Back Right. Below the entrance is a stall in which there are long-legged, brightly-dressed dolls, funny little dogs, and toy-balloons. An attendant, a girl, very modern in dress and appearance, stands beside the stall. Tables and chairs are placed here and there. At the Back two or three steps go up to where screens, large and brightly-colored, close the Café off from another part of the Hotel. Here two waitresses stand; they are Chinese girls and are dressed in bright silks; they stand perfectly still, with their hands folded. An opening Left leads into another part of the Hotel. Above it, towards Back, is an Elevator. The whole scene has the brightness and stir of a modern decoration.*

*Music comes from Left. Couples are dancing. Seated towards Centre is a lady of uncertain age and formidable appearance. The dance ends. Two couples seat themselves at tables. The Lady raises a pair of formidable lorgnettes and looks at one of the couples. Under that look the girl becomes embarrassed. She rises; she and her partner leave, going off Left. The Attendant comes from stall to the other couple.*

ATTENDANT

Voulez vous acheter une petite poupée, mademoiselle?  
Petit chien? Ballon, m'sieu?  
(*She speaks in a voice that has a doleful rhythm.*)

GIRL

Oh, the little dog . . .

## BALLOON

*(She finds that the formidable lorgnettes are levelled on her. She becomes embarrassed. Hastily her partner buys the little dog for her. They leave, going off Left.)*

*(Another couple, noticing the Lady with the glasses, do not go to a table. They remain standing near entrance.)*

YOUNG MAN

*(To Girl)* I don't know who she is, but you must remember that all the important people come here.

*(Caspar enters in time to hear this sentence.)*

CASPAR

All the important people come here!

*(He stands near stall, watching the scene. The couple who were near entrance go out Right. Now a magnificent-looking and magnificently dressed Lady sweeps in and seats herself at one of the tables. No sooner is she seated than a very distinguished-looking personage comes up to her.)*

THE PERSONAGE

Ah, dear Juana!

THE LADY

Dear Ambassador, I am here.

*(They are the Atlantean Ambassador and Juana Fern, the Opera-singer.)*

CASPAR

All the important people come here—all, all!

*(He finds an inconspicuous table and seats himself at it. Another man enters; he looks a sort of sporting character; he seats himself near Caspar. And now two men come out of the Elevator. One is large and rotund; he wears horn-rimmed glasses; the other has a pointed beard, and*

## BALLOON

*wears a white suit cut like a uniform. He has a decoration. This man looks as if he had got into the habit of making decisions and keeps on making them whether the effort is necessary or not. He stands on one of the steps and looks at the people in the Café. The Lady turns her lorgnettes on him. He does not flinch under her gaze.)*

MAN IN UNIFORM

Who is she, Circulus?

MR. CIRCULUS

She is that cold-blooded novelist—I forget her name, Minister.

*(The pair are the Minister of War and Mr. Circulus, the Newspaper Magnate. The Minister looks around as if to take the whole scene in, and then he and Mr. Circulus seat themselves at a table. A young woman, fashionably dressed, who looks as if she had a great deal of character in addition to her charm, has come out of the Elevator. She shows a great interest in the Minister. When he and Mr. Circulus seat themselves she takes a table where she can watch them.)*

MINISTER

She chills me even at this distance.

MR. CIRCULUS

Oh, that woman! Well, we'll have something full-blooded in the way of wine to help us to face her.

*(He gives an order to waitress who has come to the table.)*

MINISTER

Juana Fern! Why does she come here? There's no one here who knows her.



## BALLOON

MR. CIRCULUS

She might like to show herself in the Minoan Room. But you see who's with her?

MINISTER

The Atlantean Ambassador.

MR. CIRCULUS

He doesn't want to draw much attention to himself at the moment. We'll be at war with his country in a month.

MINISTER

Oh, you newspapermen know everything. I didn't know . . .

MR. CIRCULUS

My new service. I'll have reports made to you direct.

MINISTER

That would be a great help, really.

*(A waitress brings glasses and a bottle. They fill glasses. The Lady with the lorgnettes is now looking at the Opera-singer and the Ambassador.)*

JUANA FERN

*(Referring to the Lady)* Do you know who she is?

AMBASSADOR

Yes. She is the woman who publishes her diaries.

JUANA FERN

She puts everybody in—doesn't she?

AMBASSADOR

Every one who is any one, my dear Juana.

JUANA FERN

She hasn't recognized me yet.

AMBASSADOR

Juana!

## BALLOON

JUANA FERN

She is looking at me, but she doesn't recognize me. If I should just hum an air . . .

AMBASSADOR

I made a mistake. She is not the woman who publishes her diaries.

JUANA FERN

Who is she then?

AMBASSADOR

I knew her in Vienna—yes, thirty years ago.

JUANA FERN

Oh, but she doesn't look as old as that!

AMBASSADOR

That's it. She was then just as she is now.

JUANA FERN

You don't mean she's the woman who has been . . .

AMBASSADOR

Yes, she is that woman. She has been rejuvenated.

JUANA FERN

How horrible! I think it is detestable that she should look like that! How disgusting! She is looking at me. Even if I knew her I should not return her salutation. I never saw such a look in my life. What do you call the creature that looks like that?

AMBASSADOR

A basilisk, my dear Juana.

JUANA FERN

To me she is just like a basilisk. I am very sorry that you did not take me into the Minoan Room.

AMBASSADOR

There would be such a throng around you.

## BALLOON

JUANA FERN

There is the Minister of War with that dangerous Mr. Circulus. He used to follow me about so much—the Minister, I mean—that it was embarrassing. He told me many secrets. Why do you suppose he told me secrets?

AMBASSADOR

Juana, you are so magnetic.

JUANA FERN

Yes, that is so. People say to me, "Juana, why are you so magnetic? Why do you let yourself be so magnetic?" And now that I am no longer a girl . . .

AMBASSADOR

What are your reasons for thinking you are no longer a girl?

JUANA FERN

I don't want to have my knee pressed under the table.

AMBASSADOR

And that disagreeable woman is looking at us again.  
*(Attendant comes. Juana Fern buys a little dog. She holds up the funny little dog, and they both talk about the plaything. The attendant goes to the young woman who is interested in the Minister of War. She sells her a brightly-dressed doll. Two other men come in.)*

MR. CIRCULUS

*(To Minister)* You know who these two are, don't you?

MINISTER

No, but I come here to get to know people.

MR. CIRCULUS

*(As the two men seat themselves at a table down Right.)*  
That dark, very curly, and very exuberant young man is Mark Franks, the very newest of our newly rich.

BALLOON

MINISTER

He looks the part rather well. And who is the very correct person with him?

MR. CIRCULUS

The Manager of the Hotel Daedalus.

MINISTER

Why does he come here?

MR. CIRCULUS

He comes in here only with Mark Franks. He is not called the Manager, of course. I forget what his title is.

MINISTER

Minister, I suppose.

MR. CIRCULUS

Oh, you mustn't think the Hotel Daedalus is as democratic as all that. Ah, I remember—he is the Administrator. You know he is a Levantine Prince, don't you?

MINISTER

He, too, looks the part—both of an Hotel Administrator and a Levantine Prince.

*(And indeed the Administrator looks very distinguished; his head is completely bald, he has a pointed beard, fine but roving eyes, a courteous bearing, but with gestures, voice, and a flow of words that do not match that bearing. He wears a short morning-coat and striped trousers.)*

MR. CIRCULUS

The Administrator is such a man of the world that Mark Franks gets his deportment by being with him.

MINISTER

I see. And Mark Franks will be completely a man of the world about the time I get my extra divisions.

## BALLOON

MARK FRANKS

(*To Administrator*) I followed it out just as we rehearsed it—exactly as we rehearsed it, my dear fellow.

ADMINISTRATOR

What have I heard about you and young Andrus?

MARK FRANKS

My dear fellow, just listen to what happened. I won fifty thousand from him . . .

ADMINISTRATOR

Oh! . . . And where did you win it from him?

MARK FRANKS

At the Club. Was that all right?

ADMINISTRATOR

Yes, yes. It was all right at the Club.

MARK FRANKS

Then listen to this. This morning a young woman came to me at my office . . .

ADMINISTRATOR

All right. But not to be encouraged.

MARK FRANKS

Wait till you hear. She was young Andrus's wife. She drew a pistol out of the bosom of her dress . . .

ADMINISTRATOR

What? To shoot you?

MARK FRANKS

No. To shoot herself. They had no more money, she said, and she was going to shoot herself.

ADMINISTRATOR

What did you do? My dear fellow, let me hear!

MARK FRANKS

It might have been a scene, you know. But I gave her back

## BALLOON

the fifty thousand. But I shouldn't have told you this right off. I should have asked you what a gentleman should have done in such a case.

ADMINISTRATOR

It is just as if we had rehearsed it.

MARK FRANKS

But, of course, I made a condition.

ADMINISTRATOR

Please, please, let me hear.

MARK FRANKS

Oh, it was nothing unreasonable. I said to the young woman, "Madam, I request that you ask your husband not to come to the Club any more, and to resign his membership at the end of the season."

ADMINISTRATOR

You said that? Perfect, perfect!

MARK FRANKS

I knew you'd congratulate me on the way I avoided having any scenes. . . . Who the . . . What the . . . Who is the woman who is looking at me through her lorgnettes?

*(The Administrator whispers to him.)*

ADMINISTRATOR

So, you see . . .

MARK FRANKS

But that look of hers makes me hate her.

ADMINISTRATOR

I'll tell you what you'll do. Just meet that look of hers.

MARK FRANKS

I will. By Jove, it makes me feel good. You know what it is: it is as if you had been lifting a weight of ten pounds and then you found yourself lifting twenty pounds. How

## BALLOON

she looks at me! Did I say twenty pounds? It's like lifting sixty pounds. Hello! Look who has come in!

ADMINISTRATOR

Young Andrus.

MARK FRANKS

How should I treat him? Tell me!

ADMINISTRATOR

Distantly, I should say. Distantly.

*(But Andrus, a young man of a patrician type, sees Mark Franks and comes over to him.)*

ANDRUS

See you at the Club to-night.

MARK FRANKS

What?

ANDRUS

See you at the Club, I said.

MARK FRANKS

I said not.

ANDRUS

What is the matter with you, Franks?

MARK FRANKS

I requested your wife . . .

ANDRUS

My wife . . .

MARK FRANKS

I requested your wife to tell you not to come to the Club again.

ANDRUS

There seems to be something the matter with you, Franks.

MARK FRANKS

And to resign from the Club at the end of the season.

## BALLOON

ANDRUS

There is something the matter with you.

MARK FRANKS

Your wife . . .

ANDRUS

My wife . . .

MARK FRANKS

She came to me with a pistol . . .

ANDRUS

And made you give her back the fifty thousand, I suppose.

MARK FRANKS

There was no scene. I gave her back the fifty thousand.

ANDRUS

You have been fooled, you ass. My wife is in Australia.

*(He goes over and seats himself at the table beside the sporting-looking person. They greet each other.)*

MARK FRANKS

The woman with the pistol fooled me.

ADMINISTRATOR

Yes. But if she had been what she purported to be your conduct would have been impeccable.

MARK FRANKS

But my fifty thousand! No one is saying anything about my fifty thousand!

*(He looks around. He sees the young woman who is holding the gayly dressed doll. Mark Franks is startled.)*

MARK FRANKS

Do you see . . .

ADMINISTRATOR

What . . . what is it?



## BALLOON

MARK FRANKS

The young woman there—she who is watching the Minister of War . . .

ADMINISTRATOR

Who is she?

MARK FRANKS

Why, it was—yes, it was . . . It was she who took my fifty thousand!

ADMINISTRATOR

What an extraordinary thing! Nothing like it has ever happened here before.

MARK FRANKS

But what am I to do about it now?

ADMINISTRATOR

Not make a scene! Above all things, not make a scene.

*(The young woman perceives Mark Franks. She returns his look with some composure.)*

*(The Lady with the lorgnettes has now singled out Caspar. She raises her glasses and looks at him. He becomes very nervous. She persists in looking at him. Agitatedly he puts his hand to his breast-pocket. He takes out field-glasses. He holds them up and looks at her. They gaze at each other, each through a different sort of glass, no one noticing for a while what is going on. Then the whole Café discovers it. They all look on with immense interest. The Lady with the glasses rises. She walks out. Juana Fern rises and with a magnificent gesture gives her flowers to Caspar. All applaud.)*

ADMINISTRATOR

What personality! What magnetism!

## BALLOON

MR. CIRCULUS

What poise! What composure!

AMBASSADOR

What a touch! What a nice choice of means!  
(*The Administrator goes to Caspar's table.*)

ADMINISTRATOR

Sir, may I ask if you are a guest in the Hotel Daedalus? I am the Administrator. It would gratify me very much to know that you had registered here.

CASPAR

Yes. A room with a bath.

ADMINISTRATOR

I hope, my dear sir, that you will permit the Hotel to put you in possession of something more elaborate—the Embassy Suite.

CASPAR

Embassy Suite?

ADMINISTRATOR

We reserve it for our most distinguished guests. I shall give the office orders to have your baggage brought there.

CASPAR

I—I have to go to your Valeting Establishment.

ADMINISTRATOR

Valeting Establishment? Yes, yes. It is just out there.  
(*He indicates a place just outside the entrance.*)

JUANA FERN

I admire his reserve so much. That is what I really admire in every one—reserve. But I am told I have too much reserve myself.

AMBASSADOR

He is quite a basilisk tamer, isn't he?

## BALLOON

JUANA FERN

I adore a man of that kind.

MR. CIRCULUS

(*Coming over to the man's table*) Miss Romerantz, you know, Leila Romerantz . . .

CASPAR

Do you mean Miss Romerantz the great . . .

MR. CIRCULUS

Miss Romerantz, our great motion-picture actress. She is making an ascent from the Roof Garden of this Hotel to-night in a Balloon . . .

THE MAN

Balloon?

MR. CIRCULUS

Yes. Some distinguished people will be here to see her off. We expect that Cohen Muldoon . . .

CASPAR

Cohen Muldoon? Do you mean . . .

MR. CIRCULUS

Cohen Muldoon, the great Prize-fighter. I expect he will be here. I have thought, sir, that you might like to join us in a party . . .

CASPAR

In a party . . .

MR. CIRCULUS

In a party that will include Miss Romerantz and Conen Muldoon. In the Hotel.

(*Caspar bows. The music becomes audible again. The guests feel a new enthusiasm and applaud, looking towards the man who has made such a great success. At this moment Cohen Muldoon, the Prize-fighter, brawny and*

## BALLOON

*well groomed, enters. At first he decides that all that is happening is by way of a greeting to him. He accepts it. Then it dawns on him that it is for some one else.)*

COHEN MULDOON

*(To Attendant at stall)* I'm Cohen Muldoon! Is there anyone here who knows who I am?

ATTENDANT

*(In her plaintive voice)* Un petit chien, m'sieu?

*(The sporting-looking person who is seated near entrance rises and takes hold of Cohen Muldoon. He brings him to the table where he and young Andrus have places. This man is evidently Cohen Muldoon's follower.)*

COHEN MULDOON

Say, what kind of stuff is being pulled here, anyhow?

FOLLOWER

Don't know yet, my boy. That fellow is in it.

COHEN MULDOON

*(Surveying Caspar)* Who is he anyway? He hasn't even regular clothes.

FOLLOWER

All present think he is somebody.

ANDRUS

I should say he is somebody.

*(Cohen Muldoon shows disgust. The Elevator opens and Miss Romerantz gets out. She holds a toy-balloon and she bestows on all present a radiant smile. The Administrator escorts her to Caspar's table and presents him to her. She gives him her balloon.)*

COHEN MULDOON

Leila Romerantz never came to a fight of mine.

## BALLOON

ANDRUS

A man of mark, certainly.

COHEN MULDOON

I wish I could get a chance of marking him out.

ADMINISTRATOR

I wish to propose an occasion for the emptying of our glasses. To the success of Miss Romerantz who is about to make an ascent to-night . . .

ROMERANTZ

And all by myself, I think, Administrator. The friend who was to be with me has left the Hotel.

ADMINISTRATOR

To Miss Romerantz, and to our remarkable fellow-guest! (*The guests, all except Cohen Muldoon and the two at his table, drink with enthusiasm. Caspar rises, clinging to his chair. Miss Romerantz hands him her toy-balloon. He takes it and holds it. Then Miss Romerantz goes to the Elevator, and almost all who are in the Café stream in her direction. Some go in Elevator, some go off Left. Caspar and Cohen Muldoon and his party remain.*)

CASPAR

(*Taking up the field-glasses, then the flowers that are on his table*) A hero! But how does one keep on being a hero?

ATTENDANT

(*Thinking he is addressing her*) Une poupée, m'sieu! Un petit chien?

CASPAR

(*Not knowing what she has said*) The Valeting Establishment? That way? Thank you?

(*He goes out Right.*)

## BALLOON

COHEN MULDOON

What name did he say he had?

FOLLOWER

I heard him give the name of Caspar.

COHEN MULDOON

Caspar? Is that what he calls himself? Can you beat that? Pretending he is the fellow who is to fight me.

ANDRUS

But there's a picture of the fellow who is to fight you in the Illustrations. He couldn't impersonate him.

*(They rise from the table. They stand Centre.)*

ANDRUS

I don't think he could pretend to be your contestant, Caspar.

COHEN MULDOON

Leila Romerantz gave him her balloon.

FOLLOWER

Save her from the masquerader, my boy.

COHEN MULDOON

I won't let him get away with any more of that stuff.

*(The three go into the Elevator and go up.)*

*(The waitresses take away the screens at back, and they themselves go off. The steps from the Café go up to a landing; from this landing steps go up to a Ballroom. Outside the Ballroom a chandelier hangs, giving light to the whole scene. On the landing are bird-cages and a radio receiving-set. The attendant at stall sets out different toys; they have a more idyllic suggestion than the ones shown before.)*

*(A Young Man and a Young Girl are standing on the landing Centre. The Young Man has the sort of elegance*

## BALLOON

*and gracefulness that can only belong to a professional dancer. He has also a suggestion of Harlequin. The Young Girl is dark and pretty, and has a kind of wildness about her. Her dress is brightly-colored and odd, but not fashionable. About her is a suggestion of Columbine.)*

YOUNG MAN

Tell me your name now.

*(The Girl shakes her head.)*

You know who I am, don't you?

*(The Girl nods her head.)*

You have seen pictures of me, of course. A picture of me with one or another of my partners has been in the Illustrateds for a year.

YOUNG GIRL

You are the great dancer, Salvador.

YOUNG MAN

So you know that much. Where have you come from?

*(The Girl shakes her head.)*

YOUNG MAN

And you won't tell me your name. Of course I'll have it changed if I make you my partner. . . .

YOUNG GIRL

Partner . . .

YOUNG MAN

I give all my partners new names. Lys Lavine—I should have made her change her name . . .

YOUNG GIRL

*(Remembering something in connection with that name)*

Lys Lavine! She is the girl who has just committed suicide!

## BALLOON

SALVADOR

Not at all! They always say that about my partners. Lys Lavine hasn't committed suicide. She took an over-dose of veronal—that is all. But I am without a partner now. I telegraphed for Coralie. It will be a week before she can get here.

YOUNG GIRL

She oughtn't to come at all.

SALVADOR

Why do you say that, little girl?

YOUNG GIRL

She couldn't remain happy in ballrooms and dancing halls.

SALVADOR

When I have taken you out a couple of times you won't be nervous of any crowd.

YOUNG GIRL

Why do you talk about taking me out?

SALVADOR

I would take you on as my partner. In two nights from this you will be dancing with me. You will become famous over-night. Salvador's partner! Yes, I really mean you. When I saw you this afternoon I picked you. There is something between us—an affinity. Lys Lavine hadn't any affinity with me—real affinity, I mean. That is why she broke. Madeline had it. Genevieve didn't have it. It seems to go like that. And here you are now. And you have it.

YOUNG GIRL

Yes, but . . . The Balloon! Oh, the Balloon!



## BALLOON

*(She picks up a toy-balloon and holds it with evident delight. Caspar returns. The Young Girl sees him. Still holding the balloon she looks at him with intense interest. He does not look towards her.)*

SALVADOR

Why not fix it now?

YOUNG GIRL

That man there—who is he?

SALVADOR

How should I know? He is a man who has just come in, isn't he?

YOUNG GIRL

But doesn't he look like somebody . . . somebody . . . somebody you saw where there were green trees and green fields, riding along?

SALVADOR

The Romantic Young Girl—I see that that is what you are.

YOUNG GIRL

He doesn't notice me. It can't be he.

SALVADOR

It's odd, but I don't seem to be able to make you understand . . .

YOUNG GIRL

I'll talk to you about it, if . . .

SALVADOR

If what, little girl?

YOUNG GIRL

You talk to that man and ask him to come with us. You can ask him if his name is . . . But I don't know his name!

## BALLOON

SALVADOR

I will take you into the Ballroom now. Come along. You know that you can get any costume you like.

*(He leads her into the Ballroom; she goes reluctantly, holding the balloon. A man enters. He goes straight to Caspar who is at his table.)*

NEWCOMER

Pray excuse me, sir, for following you. I belong to the Valeting Establishment of the Hotel; we have just had the honor of a visit from you.

CASPAR

You are a Valet, you say. A Valet! Then you, I think, can tell me something I want to know—I want very much to know.

VALET

Yes, sir. Anything you would like to ask, sir . . .

CASPAR

What is it to be a hero?

VALET

I am not sure that I get the significance of your question, sir.

CASPAR

Is a man born a hero or does he become a hero by doing heroic things? It is really very important for me to have my mind made up on this point. You see, I am here in the Hotel Daedalus for to-night only. All opportunities are in the Hotel Daedalus. Now, if a man becomes a hero by doing heroic things, or becomes remarkable by doing remarkable things, here is where I should begin. Do you understand?

## BALLOON

VALET

Well, in a manner, sir.

CASPAR

By a hero I mean one who does something to raise himself out of the common obscurity . . .

VALET

I understand, sir. I quite understand.

CASPAR

I am inclined to believe that a man is not born a hero, but that he becomes a hero by doing heroic things. Now you, as Valet, know something about the people whom we call heroes. What do you think?

VALET

I was engaged with another gentleman when you came into the Valeting Establishment, sir. I saw you in the mirror. I said to myself, as I looked upon your reflection, "Here is a gentleman I should be permitted to dress."

CASPAR

Ah! You observed me, then?

VALET

Yes. But, as I have said, I was engaged with another gentleman. Allow me, sir. That neck-tie! (*Very deftly he adjusts the man's neck-tie.*) Not very much can be done about it to-night, sir. But I beg of you, sir, to let me have a conference with you later on. Your sleeve-links! I should substitute pearl for them. Allow me! (*He inserts new sleeve-links in Caspar's cuffs.*) And now, sir, about the question you have asked me . . .

CASPAR

Is a man born a hero or does he become a hero by doing heroic things?

## BALLOON

VALET

I was about to say, sir, that when I observed your reflection in the mirror, I said to myself, "Here is a gentleman in need of definition."

CASPAR

Why did you say that?

VALET

Nothing is fixed about your appearance, if you will permit me to say so, sir. A certain costuming and you would be this. A certain costuming and you would be the other. Statesman, Explorer, Philosopher, Man of Business, Scientist—you haven't defined which, sir.

CASPAR

You mean it would be possible . . .

VALET

To define you somewhat more, sir? Oh, quite possible. It would depend on the direction in which your efforts lie.

CASPAR

Statesman, Explorer, Philosopher, Scientist, Man of Business . . .

VALET

I may say, sir, that our Explorers are not as they used to be, sir. They have taken to dancing a good deal. And our Philosophers,—they are cultivating their love-lives to some extent. It makes it a little difficult. I mean from the point of view of definition—in short, from my point of view, sir.

CASPAR

But you haven't answered my question.

## BALLOON

VALET

Haven't I, sir?

CASPAR

No, no. Is a man born to be a hero, or does he become a hero by doing heroic things?

VALET

I would put it this way, sir. A man makes some suggestion of possibilities . . .

CASPAR

Yes, yes . . .

VALET

Possibilities that can be taken up, sir. In short, defined. And defined by our Valeting Establishment. Costuming. But nothing extravagant, sir.

CASPAR

Really? Can that be done?

VALET

Oh, yes. It is done all the time. A man is what he looks. I would define you, sir. Statesman, Explorer, Philosopher, Man of Business, Poet. The Valeting Establishment closes now. But perhaps you would let me see you later on . . .

CASPAR

Yes . . .

VALET

In the Hall of Palms. I frequently have an opportunity of talking to gentlemen there, sir.

CASPAR

Really, what you say is very convincing . . .

VALET

I shall see you later in the evening. Good-bye, sir.

*(The Valet goes, leaving Caspar at table.)*

## BALLOON

CASPAR

Statesman, Explorer, Philosopher, Scientist, Poet, Man of Business. I must keep these figures in my mind. But which of them? Which?

*(A strange and grotesque-looking man, approaching old age, is on the landing. He goes from cage to cage. The twittering of canaries comes from the cages. The Old Man puts shades on the cages.)*

OLD MAN

Even you have been thought of, canaries. In the book of the Hotel Daedalus it is written, "The cages are to have their shades adjusted before the lights are put full on in the Ballroom." And so rejoice that even you have been thought upon, and stay in your darkness, canaries. The nightingales in the Vale of Cama are getting ready to sing for us over the radio by this time! And to think, canaries, that you had ancestors that once picked their mates and showed their youngsters surprising flights! You that were hatched out in cages have had ancestors that sung upon green tree-tops freely and for their own delight. And now, you, canaries born in cages, are only a survival here. Your cages will be taken away; your names will cease to appear in the book of the Hotel Daedalus.

*(Caspar goes up steps and meets the Old Man.)*

CASPAR

May I ask . . .

OLD MAN

May I be informed . . .

*(They face each other, looking at each other with some recognition.)*

## BALLOON

CASPAR

I beg your pardon. Would you be good enough to tell me . . . Are you a guest here?

OLD MAN

Not a guest—an employee.

CASPAR

For a moment I thought I had seen you before. Your voice, too . . .

OLD MAN

We have met before.

CASPAR

Yes, indeed, we have met.

OLD MAN

I did not think you would care to own to it, sir. I was, I am, I have been a Clown.

CASPAR

Your are Glock the Clown. You used to spread a carpet . . .

GLOCK

Where you used to set up a Telescope. In the dusk of the evening I spread my carpet. At night you used to set up your Telescope (*looking closely at him*). But many things have happened since that time, your Excellency.

CASPAR

We must talk about all that has happened. But how is it you have come to be in the Hotel Daedalus?

GLOCK

I will tell you all about it. (*He adjusts the shade and then goes on.*) I came here to obtain a position advertised in the journals. (*He takes a cutting out of his pocket and reads.*) "Recreation-expert and play-initiator wanted." It

## BALLOON

was to obtain such a position that I came here—to initiate play and to show the children how to recreate themselves.

CASPAR

A position quite in your line, Glock. You used to have a child with you, I remember. How you used to entertain her!

GLOCK

Ah, you remember her! You remember . . . We are going back to our caravan, sir. The children here are not as you might think they are; they are not like the children of our world, sir. They are not to be piped into playing, I assure you. My head, my voice, my grimaces, my attitudes were alarming to them. They are not to be initiated into play by such as I. I alarmed them as the appearance of some ancient monster might have alarmed them.

CASPAR

Oh, of course. Children brought up in a Hotel . . .

GLOCK

It is more than that. A race that is different from ours is here. And their children are unamusable by me.

CASPAR

(*Going up the stairway*) How can you think of leaving this place, Glock? All the world and all the opportunities of the world are here. (*He stands before the Ballroom.*) Aye, the world is here, and now I see the magnificence of it all. The women with their white shoulders and their lovely hair in which the jewels gleam, and the beauty of the faces that they turn towards us. What women they are! All so youthful and all so wise in everything! And the men, Glock! Look how they hold the women! And with what assurance they move! They, Glock, are the



## BALLOON

masters of the world. And are we the ones whom the world forbids to enter the garden? No, no. All that is here I, too, will strive to master. I will, I will, I will.

GLOCK

Then you, too, will become one of the Children of Daedalus.

CASPAR

How she dances!

GLOCK

She? Who?

CASPAR

A young, dark girl. There are silver spangles in her dress. How radiant she is! She loves, she is loved! For her sake I would do the commanding action that would place me amongst the masters of the world.

GLOCK

Can she be . . .

CASPAR

I have never seen beauty like hers before. She has turned round. She has left the partner she was dancing with. She is coming towards us.

GLOCK

Ah! Ah!

CASPAR

I shall see her as she passes down the stairway.

GLOCK

It is—it is Paras Veka!

*(Suddenly, out of the Ballroom a young girl appears and stands beside Glock. She is the young girl who had appeared in the Café with Salvador. She has on a spangled dress that recalls the Circus.)*

## BALLOON

CASPAR

(*As though remembering a name*) Paras Veka!

PARAS VEKA

Hey, hey! How did it go with you to-day, old Papa?

GLOCK

Oh, la, la! But not so badly, my child. I have just been given charge of the canaries.

PARAS VEKA

And I, I have been given an offer, a great offer, an offer by Salvador, the Dancer. But I do not want to stay here.

GLOCK

I will leave, you will leave, he will leave!

CASPAR

Daughter of the King of the Gypsies . . .

PARAS VEKA

Oh, oh! I have found him again! It was indeed him that I saw a while ago. It is—it is Prince George!

CASPAR

Ah, you have made a mistake about me, I'm afraid.

PARAS VEKA

No, no! And now that I have found you again, I am not going to let you go. Oh, you don't know that I called you Prince George. What else could I call you? I did not know your name. I was a little girl then.

CASPAR

Paras Veka, the Gypsy King's daughter!

PARAS VEKA

Prince George!

GLOCK

(*Cutting a solemn caper*) And so you have found each other. Bless you, my children.

## BALLOON

CASPAR

Everything is in the Hotel Daedalus—even Paras Veka.  
Do you remember, Paras Veka . . .

PARAS VEKA

What, Prince George?

CASPAR

My going beside the cart Glock owned. Going beside it on  
a summer's day. The whole of a summer's day. You were  
sitting on the cart, Paras Veka . . .

PARAS VEKA

You pulled buttercups for me.

CASPAR

It was all a green, green country.

PARAS VEKA

You made a kite for me and I flew it.

CASPAR

Do you remember that?

PARAS VEKA

*(Her hand raised as it was raised to hold the balloon)* My  
kite, my kite! The kite Prince George gave me!

*(She runs up the stairway, her hand raised as if holding  
a kite.)*

GLOCK

*(To Caspar)* You have seen the loveliest in their world,  
and the loveliest is . . .

CASPAR

Paras Veka!

GLOCK

Ah, ah! You will come with us! She will leave, you will  
leave, I will leave! I will leave, you will leave, she will  
leave. We will go along some road that has green hedges

## BALLOON

each side of it. I will do my acrobatic tricks, Paras Veka will do her pantomime, and you, my dear sir . . .

CASPAR

And I?

GLOCK

You will have your Telescope—your very magnificent brass Telescope.

CASPAR

Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas—will I have to say that again?

GLOCK

You will say it again—Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!

*(Paras Veka comes running down the stairway.)*

PARAS VEKA

Prince George, O Prince George!

CASPAR

Yes, I will say it again—Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!

PARAS VEKA

The night after you were with us—that night I dreamt, Prince George, that my father was really a King—not of the Gypsies, but really a King. And I dreamt that I saw you and that I said to you, “Come out and hear the nightingales in my father’s garden.” And I dreamt that we sat under a dark, dark tree, and listened to the song of the nightingales. That was my dream of you, Prince George.

GLOCK

Wait! Wait! The nightingales have begun to sing in the Vale of Cama. We will bring their singing to you. Allow me! Allow old Glock to do it. Listen, children.

## BALLOON

*(He goes to the radio receiving set; he makes adjustments. Instantly the song of the nightingales is heard. Paras Veka and Caspar listen.)*

GLOCK

Do not speak to each other. Take each other's hands. You are now in Paras Veka's father's garden. I will speak for you. To-morrow you will leave this place. And where will we go? Why, along some road that has green hedges each side of it. We will arrive somewhere.

*(Paras Veka gives Caspar her hand to kiss.)*

GLOCK

But let us be serious! What means of subsistence has this suitor for the hand of the daughter of the King of the Gypsies? What does he bring to the establishment? One brass Telescope—is that all?

CASPAR

My Telescope.

PARAS VEKA

And your horse, Prince George.

CASPAR

My horse! I have no horse, Paras Veka.

PARAS VEKA

Oh, but you must have a horse. What Prince ever went without a horse! I must see you on a horse! I am proud because I am the daughter of the King of the Gypsies, and I am tired of clowns and of people who go round in a ring.

GLOCK

She is tired of clowns! Ha! Ha!

PARAS VEKA

Prince George is a hero—not a clown.

## BALLOON

CASPAR

A hero! You know that, don't you, Paras Veka? Even although you have not seen me do the heroic action?

GLOCK

To be a hero is to be just the opposite of what it is to be a clown—just the opposite. You have to be very solemn outside to be a hero. You have to be very solemn inside to be a clown. You have to make much—oh, my, my, very much of everything that happens to you to be a hero. “This thing is bigger than me—watch me face it,” says the hero. “This thing is littler than me—watch me run away from it,” says the clown. “Tramp, tramp, tramp, the boys are marching,” sings the hero. The clown gets up upon his stilts and goes round to the tune. To be a clown you don't have to be funny. To be a hero you don't have to be brave. It's just whether you think things are little or big compared with yourself (*putting his hand to his mouth and speaking directly to Caspar*). You, for instance. I don't know whether you are a clown or a hero.

PARAS VEKA

Oh, what a long speech Glock makes! But, you will ride with me, Prince George?

CASPAR

I will be your Prince George and I will ride beside you, Paras Veka.

(*Salvador comes to them from the Ballroom.*)

SALVADOR

(*To Paras Veka*) So this is the one you had to go to, leaving me without a partner in the Ballroom!

PARAS VEKA

Do not speak to me.

## BALLOON

SALVADOR

I shall have to speak to him, I suppose. (*Indicating Caspar*) Well, how should I address him?

PARAS VEKA

He is Prince George.

SALVADOR

Prince George—ha! I say, Prince George. . . .

CASPAR

Say on! But do not say that you are going to take Paras Veka, the Gypsy King's daughter. Or say it at your peril. (*Salvador takes a step to him. Caspar draws out his field-glasses and looks at him through them.*)

SALVADOR

Oh, how funny! Quite a new kind of fooling! He does it very well. Who is your friend?

PARAS VEKA

I do not know.

(*Helplessly Caspar turns the glasses on Paras Veka and on Glock.*)

SALVADOR

I thought you knew who he is.

PARAS VEKA

He is a clown.

SALVADOR

Ah, quite so! A clown!

(*He looks Caspar over critically.*)

PARAS VEKA

(*Stamping her foot*) A clown, a clown, a clown!

(*Salvador gives her his arm and they go up the stairway to the Ballroom.*)

## BALLOON

CASPAR

Wait, Paras Veka, wait! I will ride on a horse beside you!  
Listen, Paras Veka . . .

PARAS VEKA

You will ride like a clown in the Circus.  
(*Paras Veka and Salvador go into the Ballroom.*)

CASPAR

Has she really gone from me? Has she, Glock? And am I  
what she says? Am I a clown, Glock, really?

GLOCK

(*Wearily*) Not a real clown—a beginner, maybe.

CASPAR

There are the nightingales singing again! For Heaven's  
sake, Glock, cut off their singing!

(*Glock goes to receiving-set and cuts off singing. On the lower level, to the table at which they had sat before, come Cohen Muldoon and his follower. The Young Woman who had the fifty thousand from Mark Franks gets out of the Elevator. She sits at the table at which she had been before.*)

COHEN MULDOON

I'll tell you something about this Hotel. You can get  
service here, but no attention. Nobody has spoken to me  
since I came in. All thinking of Leila Romerantz and her  
Balloon ascent, and who is, or who isn't going with her.

FOLLOWER

Or else about the fellow who came into the Café and got  
the limelight upon himself.

COHEN MULDOON

The fellow who has given himself the name of my  
contestant. I'd like to get a punch in on that fellow.



## BALLOON

CASPAR

Do you believe, Glock, that a man becomes a hero by doing an heroic action?

GLOCK

I'm so tired, so tired, and you talk so much.

CASPAR

Oh, what can I do to win Paras Veka?

GLOCK

The Prize-fighter, Cohen Muldoon, is sitting below us . . .

CASPAR

Yes, there he is—sitting right below us. Now he could tell me something of what it is to be a hero. Why should I not talk to him? I will! I will go and talk to Cohen Muldoon.

*(He struggles for a while with the suggestion that has been put into his mind. At last he goes to Cohen Muldoon as to the man who can resolve his thought for him. The Young Woman takes notice of him; she gets interested in what he says to Cohen Muldoon.)*

CASPAR

Mr. Muldoon, I believe. May I speak to you, Mr. Muldoon? I want to ask you a question—a very important question.

COHEN MULDOON

*(Suspiciously)* What do you want to ask me?

CASPAR

Mr. Muldoon, what is it to be a hero?

COHEN MULDOON

*(Still more suspiciously)* What are you getting at? What are you asking me that for?

## BALLOON

CASPAR

It is a question I often ask myself. What is it to be a hero? I wonder would you agree with me if I told you my idea—it is . . . But you may not be interested.

COHEN MULDOON

I'd like to know what you are getting at.

CASPAR

I say it's a matter of opportunity. Millions and millions of people who have never been heard of, and who have never done anything, might be heroes, and on the front page of the papers if they had seen and taken—mark you, I say taken—opportunity. Take your own case . . .

COHEN MULDOON

Yes. Go right on. Take my case.

CASPAR

You did not fight because you are a fighter. You are a fighter because you have fought.

COHEN MULDOON

Say, I don't want you to tell me what I am, or why I am what I am. I'm a fighter—get that!

FOLLOWER

That's what you have got to get, my boy—Cohen Muldoon's a fighter.

CASPAR

What do you say, Mr. Muldoon?

COHEN MULDOON

What do I say? I say it's pretty cheap, your coming over here and pretending that you know me by getting into conversation with me. Pretty cheap stuff!

*(Caspar draws back. The Young Woman at the table speaks to him.)*

## BALLOON

YOUNG WOMAN

Mr. Caspar, you have a remarkable mind.

*(But before she can say anything more, Cohen Muldoon is upon him.)*

COHEN MULDOON

Getting the attention of this Hotel by pretending he's Caspar the Prize-fighter, my contestant. He is here under a false name. He is masquerading. He is pretending he is the Prize-fighter who is second to me.

CASPAR

Caspar is my name. I make no pretenses about it.

COHEN MULDOON

Well, then, go and show your papers in the office.

CASPAR

I have no papers with me.

COHEN MULDOON

No! I should think not.

CASPAR

What do you want me to do? What do you want to do with me?

COHEN MULDOON

I want to show you up, Mr. Pretender.

CASPAR

*(With the sudden fury of a mild man.)* I hate you and I defy you, Cohen Muldoon!

COHEN MULDOON

You are challenging me, are you, Mr. Pretender?

CASPAR

Why shouldn't I strike you, Cohen Muldoon?

COHEN MULDOON

Oh, boy! I wish you'd try it!

## BALLOON

CASPAR

A man becomes a hero by doing heroic things . . .

COHEN MULDOON

Well, how about it? How about striking me?

CASPAR

I can't. I can't do it in cold blood.

COHEN MULDOON

Well, here's something that will warm you up, then.

*(He flips Caspar on cheek.)*

CASPAR

I'll settle with you now, Cohen Muldoon.

*(He rushes to strike him but stops within arm's length. Cohen Muldoon strikes heavily at Caspar. Caspar is hurled into the Elevator that at that moment has opened. Paras Veka appears on landing and comes down into the Café. Glock comes down, too.)*

ELEVATOR BOY

Going up!

*(The Elevator closes and goes.)*

COHEN MULDOON

I thought I'd down him, but that guy's gone up.

FOLLOWER

That guy will hit the Roof Garden yet—take my word for it, my boy, he'll hit the Roof Garden.

*(Paras Veka, the Young Woman, Cohen Muldoon, and his Follower—all stand with their heads raised, following the passage of the Elevator.)*

END OF SECOND ACT

## THE THIRD ACT

*The Hall of Palms. There are entrances Right and Left. Back are two window recesses which go out into balconies. Back Right is a gilded grating which masks an Elevator. Palm trees are ranged around the hall. There is a sofa Centre. Left is a small table on which is a Telephone.*

*(Caspar enters Right. As he stands in the Hall looking around him uncertainly, Redvyn enters.)*

REDVYN

Hello! So we meet here . . . in the Hall of Palms!

*(Caspar looks around, identifying the place.)*

CASPAR

And my Telescope—what about it, sir?

REDVYN

It is precisely where you had it. I have left a man in charge of it. But how have you been getting on in the Hotel Daedalus?

CASPAR

Ah, I have met Paras Veka here. But I also met the Prize-fighter, Cohen Muldoon. Paras Veka . . . Cohen Muldoon!

REDVYN

Are you going back to your Telescope?

CASPAR

How easily you say that! Going back to my Telescope! Going back to my obscurity! I must do something to make Paras Veka think well of me! I must appear before her as a hero of some kind! The man from the

## BALLOON

Valeting Establishment may be able to help me—Explorer, Poet, Philosopher, Statesman, Scientist, Man of Business . . . Paras Veka will have to see me as a man of mark. Paras Veka . . .

REDVYN

What is that word?

CASPAR

It is a name, sir—a name.

REDVYN

Please say that name again.

CASPAR

Paras Veka. It's a girl's name. She is the daughter of the King of the Gypsies.

REDVYN

Paras Veka, the daughter of the King of the Gypsies! She is young?

CASPAR

Young, sir, young.

REDVYN

Say her name again.

CASPAR

Paras Veka. I knew her before I met her in this Hotel. Now I must do something to make myself appear wonderful to her. I must do something! Before I go out to where that Telescope is something must be done! Something must be done by me!

*(He goes to the window recess Right as if to look out on the Square where the Telescope is.)*

REDVYN

The daughter of the King of the Gypsies! Paras Veka! *(He meets the Minister of War who is entering from*

## BALLOON

*Left, looking abstracted but resolute. The Minister is being followed by the Young Woman who had the fifty thousand from Mark Franks. She slips within the window recess Left.)*

REDVYN

I have something to speak to you about. In fact I have come up from the Square to speak to you about it. Your office is hereabouts, isn't it?

MINISTER

You should know, Redvyn. My office here is a private one, more or less. I don't mind telling you that when I get a chance I write something. But I'm busy just now. I'm busy even in this office.

REDVYN

I'm sorry to hear it.

MINISTER

I want to speak to you about some detail. We want a report on a gas-mask.

REDVYN

I should like to write it for you.

MINISTER

We want you to do that.

REDVYN

I forgot that you might take me seriously when I said it. Of course, it's all very serious to you. But that part of my mind that has to do with gas-mask inventors is dismissed, demobilized, disbanded.

MINISTER

But I haven't told you what I want you to do. This is the gas-mask.

*(He produces it. Redvyn shrugs his shoulders.)*

## BALLOON

MINISTER

I want it tested at a height of a thousand feet.

REDVYN

I'm not going up to any such height.

MINISTER

In the Balloon. With Miss Romerantz.

REDVYN

I'm not going with her.

MINISTER

Miss Romerantz is sure to invite you to accompany her.

REDVYN

Miss Romerantz has already invited me to accompany her.

MINISTER

Well?

REDVYN

I told her I wouldn't go with her. I told her it was only a stunt—a publicity stunt. Why does she want to do it? To have the front page in the newspapers in the morning. She has more publicity than Napoleon and Balzac together ever had. Even the philosophers are writing about her. And yet she wants to do this.

MINISTER

Sorry. It would have been most useful to have the test made.

REDVYN

Why don't you make the test yourself?

MINISTER

How do you mean, Redvyn?

REDVYN

Make the ascent.

MINISTER

With Miss Romerantz?



## BALLOON

REDVYN

Why don't you?

(*The Young Woman in the recess shows that she is agitated.*)

MINISTER

But Miss Romerantz hasn't invited me to accompany her.

REDVYN

Well, that's only because she doesn't know that you want to go in the Balloon. Tell her you want to go. She'll be sure to invite you.

MINISTER

I should have to go incognito.

REDVYN

That's a pity. Still, if Miss Romerantz knows that you want to go, you'll have an invitation.

YOUNG WOMAN

He! With Leila Romerantz! In the Balloon! It must not happen!

MINISTER

Come into my office. But you had something to tell me, hadn't you, Redvyn?

REDVYN

I had almost forgotten that. A name had put it out of my mind. A name I have just heard.

MINISTER

A name, Redvyn?

REDVYN

A very odd name. But that can't interest you. I have been in the Square outside. I had tried to attach my mind to something overhead—to the Mountains, the Extinct Vol-

## BALLOON

canoes, and the Empty Seas of the Moon, let us say. But I couldn't succeed in doing it. The movement of the people in their masses interested me more and more. I was in quite a wonderful place for the observation of that movement. And I saw how the mass of people could be swung in the direction of the Ferries, and so save the Square from the crush which seems to baffle every authority.

MINISTER

Yes, I'd like to know about that. Come to my office.

*(Redvyn and the Minister of War go off Right.)*

*(Caspar and the Young Woman come out of the window recesses.)*

YOUNG WOMAN

Mr. Caspar!

CASPAR

You?

YOUNG WOMAN

Oh, Mr. Caspar, I must think at once about how I'm to get something done—something very difficult done.

*(She goes out after Redvyn and the Minister of War.)*

CASPAR

That is odd! I, too, have to think at once of how to get something done—something very difficult done. Something that will make Paras Veka know that I am not a Clown.

*(Paras Veka enters from Left.)*

PARAS VEKA

Caspar! Oh, Caspar!

CASPAR

Paras Veka!

## BALLOON

PARAS VEKA

I have come to see you, Caspar. I was dancing with Salvador, and I ran on here. I must have known somehow that I should find you here. Oh, I hope Salvador won't come till I explain it to you. You are going, Caspar. I am going with you.

*(She comes up to him.)*

CASPAR

Oh, you lovely, lovely Paras Veka!

PARAS VEKA

Oh, Caspar, when I saw that man strike you . . .

CASPAR

I had challenged him to do it. But don't let us talk about that now. Let's . . . let's be together—just together.

PARAS VEKA

*(Glasping his hand happily)* Yes, let us go up.

CASPAR

Go down, don't we?

PARAS VEKA

Oh, no. We go up.

CASPAR

But if we are going away . . .

PARAS VEKA

We'll have to go up—up to the Roof Garden.

CASPAR

But that's not going away, Paras Veka.

PARAS VEKA

The Balloon is on the Roof Garden—the Balloon, Caspar!

CASPAR

Balloon! Do you and Glock own a Balloon?

## BALLOON

PARAS VEKA

Glock and I own a Balloon? How could we, Caspar? The Balloon is Miss Romerantz's Balloon.

CASPAR

I know about it. But what has it to do with our going away, dear Paras Veka?

PARAS VEKA

We'll get Glock, and we'll go away in it.

CASPAR

In it? In the Balloon?

PARAS VEKA

Yes. In the Balloon.

CASPAR

It's wonderful to hear you say you'll go away with me. . . .

PARAS VEKA

In the Balloon, Caspar.

CASPAR

You don't mean me in the Balloon?

PARAS VEKA

Oh, Caspar, you don't think I'd go without you, after finding you like this. You don't think that, do you?

CASPAR

But it's Miss Romerantz's Balloon.

PARAS VEKA

I know I won't have to explain it to you. We'll get Glock . . .

CASPAR

Have you asked Miss Romerantz?

PARAS VEKA

Oh, no, I would have to explain it to her. She's not to

## BALLOON

start till midnight. We would be away long before that.  
We could go . . .

CASPAR

And take a loan of it? Do you mean that?

PARAS VEKA

Oh, no, Caspar. We could never bring it back. That would be too difficult. We'll have to take it altogether . . . And now I've told you. I was afraid I wouldn't be able to explain it to you before Salvador came after me.

CASPAR

Oh, you dear child! You haven't explained anything to me.

PARAS VEKA

Haven't I?

CASPAR

No, indeed, dear Paras Veka.

PARAS VEKA

What haven't I explained? It's easy to get into the Balloon—no one is guarding it. And all we have to do is to loose the rope.

CASPAR

But, Paras Veka . . . Why do you want to go in the Balloon?

PARAS VEKA

Why do I want to go in the Balloon? Don't you want to go in the Balloon?

CASPAR

Oh, of course I do.

PARAS VEKA

And so I don't have to explain it at all—you know it all.

CASPAR

What?

## BALLOON

PARAS VEKA

Here's Salvador . . . Not another word till we get rid of him.

*(She turns her back on Caspar as Salvador comes to them from the Left. He carries a little gramophone. He puts it down and the gramophone plays. He advances towards Paras Veka. She, as if hypnotized, comes to him. They go through the motions of the dance, leaving Caspar standing by.)*

SALVADOR

I know about that man. He has a Telescope outside.

PARAS VEKA

You think you know him. You don't know him at all.

SALVADOR

Why did you remember him?

PARAS VEKA

You—you cannot see what he has—something free, something commanding.

SALVADOR

Yes, that's the sort of temperament you have—the wildly romantic. I must take it into account. I am going to make you my partner. You know what that means?

PARAS VEKA

I'll dance with you in all sorts of smart places?

SALVADOR

With Salvador in person. Be careful about this turn.  
*(They dance towards passage Left.)*

PARAS VEKA

*(Kissing her hand to Caspar)* Coming back! Don't forget! Going up!

## BALLOON

CASPAR

I won't have to do anything with myself, after all! Dear Paras Veka will go away with me—away with me just as I am! Still, we oughtn't to go away from the Hotel so soon . . . so many opportunities in the Hotel Daedalus! Going up! Going up in a Balloon? What made her think about that, I wonder? Going up, up, up! Dizzy! I have got dizzy feeling myself in the Balloon! I must get her mind off that Balloon.

*(Paras Veka comes running to him.)*

PARAS VEKA

Prince George! Salvador has gone back for another gramophone! There is no one near us now!

*(She runs up to him; she and Caspar withdraw into a window recess. He kisses her there.)*

PARAS VEKA

We are very high up, aren't we, Caspar?

*(His arms are around her and she leans her head back.)*

PARAS VEKA

I like to look out and see how high, how high up we are! I like to look below and see that we are higher than any one else, we two. You can draw me back. And then you look below. And I'll draw you back.

*(He draws her to him and kisses her.)*

PARAS VEKA

You see it's because we're so high up. And for every height we go I'll kiss you like . . . As if I had found you again, Caspar.

CASPAR

And then we'll go down . . .

## BALLOON

PARAS VEKA

No. Up, up, Caspar.

CASPAR

Yes, up. We'll go up to the Roof Garden. We'll stay there for a long time. We'll be so high up that we'll be able to look down and see everything far below us. And listen, darling, I'll tell you what we'll do after that. After we've been on the Roof Garden we'll . . .

PARAS VEKA

We'll just go into the Balloon.

CASPAR

The Balloon!

PARAS VEKA

It will bring us higher, don't you see? Higher than we ever thought we'd be. Oh, won't it be grand? I'll kiss you and kiss you a hundred times and you'll kiss me a hundred times. Oh, Caspar, darling . . .

CASPAR

Yes. But I've just had another thought about our going away together . . .

PARAS VEKA

What is it, Caspar?

CASPAR

I have money . . .

PARAS VEKA

Yes, oh, yes.

CASPAR

We could take a taxi-cab . . . Oh, for quite a long time. Go on and on and on in it. We two together . . .

PARAS VEKA

In a taxi-cab?



## BALLOON

CASPAR

And go to the Ferry. And take a Ferry-boat. Cross over to the other side. Then come back on the Ferry. Then cross over again. And keep going and coming and coming and going till morning. You and I, Paras Veka . . .

PARAS VEKA

All night like that?

CASPAR

I think it a good idea, don't you, Paras Veka?

PARAS VEKA

But the Balloon . . .

CASPAR

Of course, this won't be like the Balloon. No heights, of course. But there will be lights on the River. Paras Veka, you and I will be going back and forth and forth and back with the stars shining above us and the lights on the River . . .

PARAS VEKA

But we wouldn't be going up, up, and up in the air . . .

CASPAR

Oh, no. We'd just leave the Hotel . . .

PARAS VEKA

In a taxi-cab! But that won't be the way, Caspar, to do it. You are a hero, you see, and I am the daughter of the King of the Gypsies, and we'd have to go away together in some wonderful way. Now the Balloon . . . Our Balloon, Caspar!

CASPAR

Ah, there's where something goes wrong! It isn't our Balloon. It isn't your Balloon, it isn't my Balloon, it isn't Glock's Balloon. It's Miss Romerantz's Balloon. Do you

## BALLOON

really want to take the Balloon that belongs to Miss Romerantz?

PARAS VEKA

But, Caspar, it isn't as if it could upset Miss Romerantz in any way. It wouldn't, Caspar. They'll be glad to give her another Balloon. All she need do is to telephone some place. And she's not going until midnight . . .

CASPAR

Now do you really like the idea of the Balloon?

PARAS VEKA

The idea! But it isn't just an idea, Caspar . . .

CASPAR

The idea of taking Miss Romerantz's Balloon . . .  
Glock might not like it.

PARAS VEKA

Glock! But you know that Glock will go anywhere, do anything, that we go into, Caspar.

CASPAR

But this particular idea . . .

PARAS VEKA

But you are calling it an idea, Caspar! Why are you doing that?

CASPAR

Paras Veka, I'll have to be terribly disappointing. I can't steer a Balloon. I have never been in a Balloon.

PARAS VEKA

I never thought you'd be upset about a thing like that. Why, Caspar, we'll need no one to steer it at all! We'll just have a grand rise and then come down somewhere.

CASPAR

Yes, but there are certain things that you haven't thought

## BALLOON

about, Paras Veka. I know you haven't thought about them, because they'd only occur to one who went to work them out a bit. We might be blown out to sea.

PARAS VEKA

Blown out to sea!

CASPAR

Blown right out into the middle of the ocean!

PARAS VEKA

Something tells me, Caspar, that such a thing couldn't happen.

CASPAR

It has happened—believe me, it has happened.

PARAS VEKA

It can't happen. I'd feel it if it could.

CASPAR

It's a wonderful idea, Paras Veka . . .

PARAS VEKA

Idea!

CASPAR

It's just like yourself, you darling girl. It's wonderful, but it's not very practical.

PARAS VEKA

Not very practical?

CASPAR

No. I'm sorry to have to say it, but it's not very practical . . .

PARAS VEKA

Oh, it breaks my heart to hear you talk about it like that! You, Prince George! Oh, can't you make it practical? Surely you could do that for me.

## BALLOON

CASPAR

If I only knew about Balloons . . .

PARAS VEKA

But couldn't you for this time . . . Couldn't you, Caspar? . . . do something that you never did before and that you never thought you could do?

CASPAR

But, dear, how could we go up in a Balloon without clothes for the trip?

PARAS VEKA

Can't we get them?

CASPAR

I don't see where we could get them.

PARAS VEKA

And if we can't get them?

CASPAR

Why, your blood would freeze in the Balloon.

PARAS VEKA

Whose blood would freeze?

CASPAR

Your blood. My blood. Glock's blood.

*(Paras Veka puts her hand before her eyes. She is crying with bitter disappointment.)*

PARAS VEKA

We can't get the clothes that would prevent our blood freezing in the Balloon?

CASPAR

I think not.

PARAS VEKA

But everything is in the Hotel, Caspar. Surely we can get the clothes here.

## BALLOON

CASPAR

I think not. And what about the Ferry-boat? You think it a good idea, don't you, Paras Veka?

PARAS VEKA

It is just like you.

CASPAR

I'm very pleased that I thought about it.

PARAS VEKA

It was I who thought about the Balloon. Remember that, Caspar.

CASPAR

It was you who thought about the Balloon. But why are you asking me to remember that?

PARAS VEKA

I'm going to remember that you thought about the Ferry-boat. I'm going away from you now.

CASPAR

And I'm going with you this time.

PARAS VEKA

No. I mean I am going away from you. I came to you here, and I kissed you, and then you said that you wouldn't go up in the Balloon with me! You said our blood would freeze. If it did freeze, it would only freeze a little, and we would have been away—away and up, and that would have been everything. It would have been everything I wanted! And you talked about a Ferry-boat! So I'll never let you see me any more.

CASPAR

Do you mean what you are saying, Paras Veka?

PARAS VEKA

I don't admire you for thinking about the Ferry-boat.

## BALLOON

Not at all! I said it was just like you, and it is—the very same as you are, Caspar! You have nothing in you that would make a hero—nothing, nothing, nothing! No one who was the least bit of a hero would talk of going in a Ferry-boat after a girl had talked to him about going up in a Balloon!

CASPAR

But this can't be! What would I do if you went from me—if you went from me like this?

PARAS VEKA

Go out into the street and stand by your Telescope! You can do that. (*She dries her eyes, showing that she has been crying.*) You won't know where I have gone! I won't know where you have gone! It will be as if we had never seen each other since that time long ago. And I'm going to change myself into a dancer—I am! I am! And you'll be out there in the street!

(*The gramophone has begun to play in the passage Left. Paras Veka, thinking that the man who has come in and who is standing by is Salvador, goes to him. He takes her, and they go through a few steps to the music. Then Salvador enters. Paras Veka sees she has gone through the steps with a man whom she had not seen before. He is Redvyn.*)

REDVYN

You are Paras Veka whom I was going to look for.

PARAS VEKA

There is no reason, sir, why you should look for me.

REDVYN

Will you dance with me?

## BALLOON

PARAS VEKA

(*As Salvador comes towards them, a frown on his face.*)  
In the Ballroom, sir.

REDVYN

We will go there.

(*He takes Paras Veka off Right, leaving Caspar and Salvador facing each other.*)

CASPAR

Paras Veka, Paras Veka!

SALVADOR

I would have changed that name—quite unsuitable!

CASPAR

You have no right to anything belonging to her—her name nor anything else.

SALVADOR

More right than you have, let me tell you.

CASPAR

(*To himself*) More right than I have! Yes, yes, yes!  
Opportunity not taken . . .

SALVADOR

(*With gesture towards windows*) Go back to your Telescope.

CASPAR

Opportunity was here, and I did not take it . . . Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!

SALVADOR

She has gone from us. But I can get myself another partner. Back into the street, you!  
(*Salvador goes off Left.*)

CASPAR

Back into the street! Back into my obscurity!

## BALLOON

*(The Young Woman who had followed the Minister of War enters from Right.)*

YOUNG WOMAN

Mr. Caspar! Oh, won't you let me speak to you! You wanted to know—I heard you ask Cohen Muldoon—whether one is born daring or becomes daring by doing daring things . . .

CASPAR

I have missed my opportunity. . . .

LILLIAN

I can talk to you about that. You may call me Lillian, Mr. Caspar. Oh, please come this way with me.

*(She draws Caspar off Left. Mark Franks enters from Right.)*

MARK FRANKS

I saw the Administrator looking at me when we met the girl who got my fifty thousand. I know what was in his mind. He was just on the point of telling me not to make a scene. I showed him I wasn't going to. He thinks I don't know the world yet; but I do. I got to know it on the inside ten years ago, and now I'm only letting him show me some of the outside things. When I first began to go into the world, going to dances where there was just ordinary people, a girl said to me, "I know that you're a gentleman and that you'll see me home." I did see her home. And that put me on the inside of what it is to be a gentleman. I paid the taxi-fare and I had to walk back myself. And the next morning I said to myself, "Now you know what it costs to be a gentleman; are you going to be a gentleman, or are you going to let it alone?" "I'm going to be a gentleman," I said to my-



## BALLOON

self. Ever since then it's just as if I were seeing a girl home, with the taximeter going up, going up, going up. I know what it is to be a gentleman: it is to pay for all the inconveniences even when it is inconvenient for you to pay for them. I belong to all the best clubs; I'm able to ride horseback; I have all the right cars that all the right people have; I have a private suite in the Hotel Daedalus. Well, then why can't I forget about the fifty thousand? I'll have to tell myself that it's just that the taxi-fare has gone up, up, up some more. Let it go. No, I'll talk to that girl the next time I see her. And I see her everywhere in the Hotel. She even looks straight at me. If I went up to her and said, "Give me back my fifty thousand?" she'd have to give it back. But I can't go up to her. "Don't make a scene," said the Administrator. Don't make a scene! But nobody is going to do anything about my fifty thousand! It makes me feel sorry that I ever came into the Hotel Daedalus. Yes, it makes me feel sorry that I'm here and that I know how a gentleman should behave. A gentleman should be able to look on any one who has taken something from him and not make a scene. Ten years ago it was that taxi-fare I was let in for, and now it's fifty thousand silvers. Next year it will be a hundred thousand, I suppose. All right. I know what it is to be a gentleman. It is to look like this when one pays one's taxi-fare to any distance.

*(He lights a cigarette, and makes an effort to smile like a complete man of the world.)*

Every one is gone to hear Juana Fern. I'll go there. I

## BALLOON

bet I'll see the girl who got the fifty thousand from me, and I bet she'll look straight at me.

*(Mark Franks goes off Right. Caspar and Lillian come back Left, Lillian still holding his arm.)*

LILLIAN

You thought you believed it.

*(She lights a cigarette.)*

CASPAR

I thought I believed it? Only just thought I believed it?

LILLIAN

You believed it with your mind and it's no good to believe a thing with your mind only. Don't you know that?

CASPAR

No.

LILLIAN

We never really believe a thing until we act it out.

CASPAR

Do you tell me so? We never really believe a thing until we act it out?

LILLIAN

That is so. There is no possible doubt about its being anything else but so. I know that much. You see, I have acted out what I believed. I got fifty thousand silvers from Mark Franks just to show that to myself. I'm daring now because I did that daring thing. I have brought you here, Mr. Caspar, because I want you to help me . . . Yes, help me. Oh, no, it was not just to discuss what we have been discussing. I want your help—I want it badly, Mr. Caspar.

CASPAR

What is it you want me to do? Is it dangerous?

## BALLOON

LILLIAN

It is dangerous. Indeed it is rather desperate. You'll be surprised when you hear what it is. You won't be able to help feeling surprised. I want you to help me to kidnap the Minister of War.

CASPAR

To kidnap the Minister of War!

LILLIAN

Yes. He is going up in the Balloon with Leila Romerantz.

CASPAR

In the same Balloon that Paras Veka wanted me to go up with her in?

LILLIAN

I don't know about that.

CASPAR

And you want me to help you to kidnap the Minister of War! Me, who couldn't bring myself to go up in the Balloon with Paras Veka. You can't mean it?

LILLIAN

Yes, to kidnap the Minister of War in the Hotel Dædalus—we two.

CASPAR

But it could never be done!

LILLIAN

It can be done. Done by us.

CASPAR

It would be dangerous.

LILLIAN

It would be desperate.

CASPAR

It would be sensational.

## BALLOON

LILLIAN

It would be momentous.

CASPAR

It would be indeed momentous!

LILLIAN

Oh, I hope you'll help me. Especially now as I have told you what I want to do. You ought to help me, you know. Because we both came to think about the same kind of idea.

CASPAR

But could it be done?

LILLIAN

You see the grating in the wall there. That grating masks an Elevator. It is never used by the guests. It is to bring up the palms. It goes down and comes up from the basement of the Hotel.

*(She goes to the grating. Caspar, fascinated, goes with her.)*

LILLIAN

The Elevator is here now. And the grate is opened from the outside. I have the key. I'll unlock it now. So you see! We step into the Elevator with His Excellency. Of course you'll say that you never ran an Elevator . . .

CASPAR

I have . . . I have run an Elevator.

LILLIAN

What a remarkable coincidence!

CASPAR

And when it goes down to the basement with—with us—in it?

## BALLOON

LILLIAN

The Minister of War will be semi-conscious. You see this spray? It has a very powerful anesthetic. I will spray it in his direction as we go down to the basement. The basement is quite different from anything the guests have ever seen. Enormous corridors. Odd chambers. Servants whom you never saw, speaking languages you never heard in your life. Well, we can lock him up, semi-conscious as he will be, in one of the odd chambers of the passage. No one would think of looking for him there. I could telephone the Hotel after Miss Romerantz has made her ascent.

CASPAR

My belief comes back to me again!

LILLIAN

Yes, but remember what I told you . . .

CASPAR

That we only believe a thing when we act it out . . .

LILLIAN

When you come up again in that Elevator you will know.

CASPAR

But will I know?

LILLIAN

You will. And now I am going to telephone him.

CASPAR

Telephone whom?

LILLIAN

Telephone the Minister of War.

CASPAR

What for?

LILLIAN

To ask him to come in here.

## BALLOON

CASPAR

You are not going to do that, are you?

LILLIAN

Yes. In a minute . . .

*(She lights a cigarette.)*

CASPAR

In a minute! Will it be in a minute?

LILLIAN

Not the kidnapping. Only the telephoning . . .

CASPAR

But of course he won't come. He won't just come in because you telephone asking him to come in.

LILLIAN

Oh, I think he'll come. I can get to his office by a direct connection. And in the office here he always answers the telephone himself. *(She makes the connection.)* To speak to the Minister. Yes, Excellency. Would you see me for a few minutes? It is impossible for me to go to your office. Would you see me in the Hall of Palms. I only ask for five minutes. A matter that will interest you very much. Thank you, Excellency.

*(She hangs up the receiver.)*

CASPAR

He is not coming, is he?

LILLIAN

He is coming.

CASPAR

And in a few minutes I shall be kidnapping the Minister of War. What would Paras Veka have thought if she had known I'd be doing such a thing? *(To Lillian)* I wish—I wish I had trained myself a bit. I mean taken a

## BALLOON

course in doing something of this kind. Of course, one couldn't take a course in just this—coming out of the street and kidnapping the Minister of War right away. But I wish I had taken a course in something of the kind. Couldn't I? Oh, you mustn't say I couldn't!

LILLIAN

Oh, but it is too late to think of that now.

CASPAR

Is it? Is it really too late? Suppose—suppose we put it off for a night or so?

LILLIAN

No, no! It must be to-night—it must be to-night!

CASPAR

I mean I could be doing something. Training myself to deal with a situation—well, with a situation such as seems to be approaching. It was while I was walking up and down beside my Telescope that I thought about a man not being born a hero . . . Of course, now you tell me that that belief has to be acted out.

LILLIAN

It has! I assure you, Mr. Caspar!

CASPAR

Still, I believe one could grasp the conception better if one spent a while out there.

LILLIAN

Oh, but I haven't made you understand that if he is not kidnapped he will go up in the Balloon . . .

CASPAR

Balloon!

LILLIAN

The Balloon that's on the Roof Garden.

## BALLOON

CASPAR

It's dangerous to go up in it, I know. But it is not more dangerous than kidnapping the Minister of War. This is really a very dangerous thing to do, you know.

LILLIAN

It's a desperate thing. I had no thought myself of doing it an hour ago. And then I overheard . . .

CASPAR

What did you overhear?

LILLIAN

That he was to be sent up in the Balloon with Leila Romerantz.

CASPAR

But do you think it is a very dangerous thing to go up in the Balloon? Do you think it is as dangerous as—as—what we are going to do now?

LILLIAN

I haven't thought of it in that way. You see I got myself employed in this Hotel. I had to buy out the girl who had the typewriting office . . .

CASPAR

Yes, yes . . .

LILLIAN

To be near the Minister of War. I have managed to do a great deal of his typewriting for him—his private work, you know . . .

CASPAR

I don't understand what all this has to do with his going up in the Balloon or being kidnapped, either. Really, I don't.

LILLIAN

He never really looked at me all the time I was doing his



## BALLOON

typewriting for him. I might as well have been at home, in my own apartment . . .

CASPAR

Still, I don't understand . . .

LILLIAN

It was that that made me think of doing something really daring. It was that that made me go out and get the fifty thousand silvers from Mark Franks . . . It was ridiculously easy.

CASPAR

I hadn't heard of your doing that. You see, I don't know you at all.

LILLIAN

And then, just a while ago, I heard it being proposed to him that he should go up in the Balloon with Leila Romerantz. With Leila Romerantz! Every one is talking about her and about her going up in the Balloon, and he would have to notice her. Besides, the Balloon is very small. They'd be just together all the time—almost as close as in a taxi-cab. He wouldn't be able to forget her for a long time. And I know Leila Romerantz! She would use every advantage!

CASPAR

I can see it all now . . . You are in love with the Minister of War!

LILLIAN

Oh, desperately, desperately!

*(The Minister of War enters.)*

CASPAR

Mountains, Extinct Volcanoes, Empty Seas!

BALLOON

*(He sinks down on the sofa. Lillian goes to meet the Minister.)*

LILLIAN

It was I who telephoned to you, Excellency. I suppose you can guess what I have to say to you?

MINISTER

Oh, easily. I am thinking of having some quota arrangement made for people who have information to give me. Ten a day, say, for information about Atlantean preparation. Six a day about Libyan preparation, and so on. Yes, I am going to have some such arrangement.

LILLIAN

This is information of a different kind, Excellency. Your play . . .

MINISTER

My play! What about it? Which of you, may I ask, has the information?

LILLIAN

This gentleman has more complete information than I have. I will only say that I know that . . .

MINISTER

What do you know?

LILLIAN

I know that about twenty of your epigrams—I don't know if they are your finest epigrams . . .

MINISTER

What about them?

LILLIAN

Have appeared in the draft of a play which has been submitted to . . . *(she whispers to him)*. And Max Reinhardt has promised . . .

## BALLOON

MINISTER

But Max Reinhardt promised me . . .

LILLIAN

This is Max Reinhardt's secretary.

MINISTER

(*Turning to Caspar*) Oh, so that is who the gentleman is! One could see his background in his brilliant behaviour of this evening. Well . . .

LILLIAN

Mr. Caspar!

(*Caspar rises to his feet.*)

CASPAR

(*Speaking very rapidly*) It is very important that we should have a talk about these things. Let us go.

(*He points dramatically to the Elevator. Lillian walks to it and opens it.*)

LILLIAN

Max Reinhardt is going to use the basement of this Hotel for his production of the Thousand and One Nights.

MINISTER

Oh, he is going to do that, is he?

LILLIAN

We had better go with him—I mean with you, Mr. Caspar.

(*They go into the Elevator. The grating is closed. And now the Valet with the Lady with the lorgnettes enters from Right.*)

VALET

So far our working together is only tentative, but I am convinced that our partnership has immense possibilities. You are . . .

## BALLOON

LADY

A psycho-synthesist. The first to engage in the profession.  
(*She raises her glasses and looks at him. The Valet retreats.*)

There are psycho-analysts, so why should there not be psycho-synthesists? They should synthesise what is in the psyche.

VALET

Must you look at people in that way?

LADY

Yes. My idea is to startle people into a consciousness of their psychical defects. Afterwards I make a new synthesis. . . .

VALET

Yes. And there is where we can work together. That new synthesis I give expression to in dress. The man sees himself dressed and then he enters into a complete realization of the new synthesis. I am convinced that a partnership between us has immense possibilities.

LADY

Why have we come here?

VALET

I was convinced we should find him in the Hall of Palms. He has given me a commission as regards his dress, and I think you can help him towards a synthesis.

LADY

He is not here.

VALET

He may be here at any moment.

(*The Elevator returns. Caspar comes out of it.*)

## BALLOON

VALET

Oh, yes, here is Mr. Caspar.

CASPAR

Are we back? Is this the Hall of Palms? It doesn't seem the same Hall of Palms. I would have some alterations made in it—something that would suggest—well, achievement of some kind. Oh, you are waiting on me, are you? I was about to go to your Establishment. It's not too late, is it, to place an order?

VALET

We can have any dress ready for you, sir, at any time.

CASPAR

An aviator's suit?

VALET

Yes, sir.

CASPAR

I want it. I, Caspar, shall mount up with a suit on to save my blood from freezing. Up, up, in the Balloon with her—with Paras Veka.

VALET

When do you need it, sir?

CASPAR

At once. And can your Establishment supply a lady's flying costume?

VALET

Young lady, sir?

CASPAR

Young lady.

VALET

We can make one ready at once, sir.

## BALLOON

CASPAR

And another costume—elderly gentleman. I am taking two of my friends up with me.

*(The Lady raises her glasses and looks at Caspar. He meets her gaze unwaveringly.)*

CASPAR

*(Taking out his field-glasses and handing them to Valet)*

Please give these to Madam with my compliments. I have no further use for them. And as it was through and by means of them that I began my career in the Hotel Daedalus, I think she should have them.

*(Valet hands glasses to Lady.)*

LADY

Quite a different character from the one I looked over in the Café—quite, quite different. Tremors suppressed! Resolution high! Synthesis as hero fully seventy-five per cent—no, as high as eighty per cent achieved.

CASPAR

The ascent I shall make to-night will put me higher than your eighty, I assure you, Madam.

VALET

What magnetism! What personality!

LADY

What personality! What magnetism!

VALET

*(As Caspar strides to the doorway)* I have the honour to wait upon you, sir.

END OF THIRD ACT

## THE FOURTH ACT

### FIRST SCENE:

*The Playroom of the Hotel Daedalus. Left are two windows. The entrance is back Centre. The Playroom is unlighted. Caspar comes under light of entrance arch. He is in aviator's dress, and he carries another aviator's dress. He stands under light for a moment, then steps in and switches on light.*

*Two people become visible; they are Redvyn and Paras Veka. Redvyn has been making love to Paras Veka; his arm is about her and she is dominated by him. Caspar sees them; he gasps and recoils. He advances again, but lets the aviator's dress slip out of his arms. Paras Veka sees him; she moves away a little, drawing Redvyn with her who holds her by the hand. Caspar stands still; a groan comes from him. Then Glock suddenly appears; it is as if he had popped out of a box or from a press. He sways a little as he stands.*

*Glock goes through the motions of speaking with gestures. Nothing is heard. Then, as if at the end of a long sentence, words come.*

### GLOCK

. . . And all this I say unto you in the name of Carpets and brass Telescopes, Amen!

### PARAS VEKA

*(In distress)* Glock gets these queer fits and goes on in that queer way sometimes.

*(Glock opens one of the windows and goes out.)*

## BALLOON

PARAS VEKA

*(Crying out)* Look there! Look! Oh, I knew he was going to do a crazy thing again. *(She rushes to the window.)* That wire drew him! He is going to walk across it to the wing of the building over the way. Oh, I cannot look—how high, how high up we are! He is coming back; he is walking backwards. Now he has reached the ledge of the wall. He will stay there. No, no, he cannot stay there! He will fall! Oh, if I could bring him to the fire-escape! *(She goes out of the window.)*

REDVYN

My God! She will fall—she cannot possibly get to the fire-escape! Her life is in danger! Now she has reached the other ledge!  
*(He goes through window.)*

CASPAR

*(Opening the other window)* He has saved her—he has saved Paras Veka. But Glock is hanging on to the ledge! He is in danger—Glock is in danger!  
*(He goes out through the other window as Redvyn comes back, drawing Paras Veka in.)*

PARAS VEKA

Is there no danger now? Oh, I feel myself falling down the face of the wall! And you saved me—you saved me, Redvyn! But Glock! God above, what has happened to Glock? Oh, why didn't you save him—save him first?  
*(Caspar comes back, drawing Glock in.)*

REDVYN

He is saved. He is all right, you see!

PARAS VEKA

And you saved him—you, you!



BALLOON

*(She looks at Caspar, taking in his bearing, his new appearance.)*

PARAS VEKA

*(Under her breath, but Caspar hears her)* Prince George!

GLOCK

Lay me down; let me lie; I am quite dizzy.

*(He lies down on a couch.)*

PARAS VEKA

*(To Caspar)* Please tell me what you have come for, and why you have that suit on.

CASPAR

I have come for you, Paras Veka.

PARAS VEKA

For me! Do you think I was expecting you?

CASPAR

I have come for you. I am ready. In a minute you can be ready to go with me—there is the suit I brought you.

REDVYN

Miss Paras Veka is going to marry me.

CASPAR

You say that! She hasn't said it. She was expecting me to come here for her, all ready to take her away—to take her away in the Balloon!

*(Paras Veka makes a gesture of dissent. Caspar turns to her appealingly.)*

CASPAR

You think that this man has done wonderful things. But has he done anything wonderful in the last hour or so? Some one else has, perhaps. You called me Prince George. I am a long way ahead of your Prince George. He could never have done what I have done. Give me all that you

## BALLOON

had for Prince George, and give me more—more than that. Come, Paras Veka! Come with me up to the Roof Garden and into the Balloon! Come away with me, Paras Veka!

REDVYN

Permit me to tell you that it is all nonsense about the Balloon.

CASPAR

Why nonsense; may I ask?

REDVYN

Miss Paras Veka is not going in a Balloon. She is . . .

CASPAR

Why, the Balloon is Miss Paras Veka's very own idea.

PARAS VEKA

Do you say that? Well, I don't want to hear about that Balloon ever again. Never, never, never will I go up in it.

REDVYN

So you hear . . .

CASPAR

Do you say that, Paras Veka?

PARAS VEKA

Oh, yes, I say it.

REDVYN

(*Taking her hand*) So you see. And Miss Paras Veka is coming with me. We are getting married. You, in a way, introduced me to Miss Paras Veka . . .

CASPAR

Don't say that anything you can do for me . . .

REDVYN

Oh, of course not. Your Telescope is safe. I left a guard beside it.

## BALLOON

CASPAR

What the devil took you away from it and in here?

REDVYN

Well, after all, this Hotel . . . Well, it is my world. I stayed for a while beside your Telescope, and I tried to attach my mind to what was above me. But the movement of the people in their masses . . .

CASPAR

You hadn't calibre enough to stay for a while outside what you call your world—this Hotel.

REDVYN

I think you're right about that. And I have to see the Minister of War about my plan now.

CASPAR

You won't see him.

REDVYN

Why not?

CASPAR

The Minister of War has been kidnapped.

REDVYN

Kidnapped?

CASPAR

Kidnapped by me.

REDVYN

*(Satisfied now that Caspar is out of his mind, and ceasing to consider him)* I see.

PARAS VEKA

*(With some alarm on account of the state of Caspar's mind)* We will talk to him; Glock and I will talk to him here.

## BALLOON

REDVYN

And remember, dear Paras Veka, that I'm coming back to take you to the Roof Garden.

PARAS VEKA

I'll wait here for you, Redvyn.

*(Redvyn goes out.)*

PARAS VEKA

*(To Caspar)* What do you think happened to Glock? Do you remember that he used to get strange and wild when he drank brandy? But, of course, you don't remember that about him. You saved him. You change, don't you? I think you are a hero, and then you turn out to be a clown. And when I have it settled in my mind that you are a clown you come back and you are a hero. And then you make me think that you are . . .

CASPAR

That I am what, Paras Veka?

PARAS VEKA

You talked about kidnapping the Minister of War . . .

CASPAR

What about that?

PARAS VEKA

I think that you get strange sometimes.

*(The Telephone rings. Paras Veka goes to it.)*

PARAS VEKA

*(At telephone)* Yes. What did you say your name was? Lillian? Mr. Caspar is here.

*(She turns and faces Caspar.)*

PARAS VEKA

Some one—Lillian she says her name is—is coming up here to see you.

## BALLOON

CASPAR

Great Heavens! Can anything have happened? Can anything have gone wrong?

PARAS VEKA

Who is Lillian?

CASPAR

I will tell you—I will tell you in a moment, Paras Veka.

PARAS VEKA

Perhaps it is with her that you have made yourself ready to go in the Balloon. You wouldn't go with me—I remember that.

CASPAR

The Balloon! You and I and Glock will have to go away in the Balloon at once, Paras Veka.

PARAS VEKA

Why, Caspar?

CASPAR

Because I'm in danger—in grave danger, Paras Veka!

PARAS VEKA

Through Lillian, I suppose?

CASPAR

Through that girl. This is what happened . . .

PARAS VEKA

Do you mean to say that you went straight to her after you left me?

CASPAR

This is what happened . . .

PARAS VEKA

But did you go straight to her?

CASPAR

I didn't leave you. You left me.

## BALLOON

PARAS VEKA

It doesn't matter how you say it. You went straight to her;  
I know you did.

CASPAR

It doesn't matter about that now. Don't let us talk about it.  
Don't let us talk about anything but about getting into the  
Balloon and getting away.

PARAS VEKA

And because you have got into danger through this Lillian  
have I to go away without talking with Mr. Redvyn?  
Without talking with him ever again? I couldn't do that.  
He is the most wonderful man I ever met. I didn't think  
there was such a wonderful man in the whole world as  
Mr. Redvyn.

CASPAR

Redvyn! He has everything. I have nothing—nothing but  
the brass Telescope outside that he hired from me! And  
is he going to take you—you, Paras Veka?

PARAS VEKA

I am not the same Paras Veka who asked you to go up in  
the Balloon with her. I am different. I am different be-  
cause Mr. Redvyn has spoken to me.

CASPAR

Then . . . You will marry him, Paras Veka?

PARAS VEKA

Oh, how strange it would be if he should really, really  
ask me!

CASPAR

He has asked you to marry him. He believes he has asked  
you to marry him.

## BALLOON

PARAS VEKA

But that was so strange. It was just as if it had been in a dream. But I'm changed since he talked to me. And you cannot bring me with you in the Balloon—never, never, never!

*(Lillian enters. She has on a different frock and now looks a brilliant young Society woman. Glock springs up from the couch when she enters.)*

LILLIAN

I beg your pardon . . . *(She goes to Caspar as Paras Veka goes to the windows.)* Should I give my name?

GLOCK

No names and no addresses.

LILLIAN

Oh, thanks. You are Mr. Glock, aren't you? How charming everything is here!

CASPAR

What have you come to tell me?

LILLIAN

There was no purpose in keeping him there in those gloomy, gloomy corridors. And he had no cigarettes with him—I knew that . . .

CASPAR

And what did you do about it? Tell me that.

LILLIAN

I just telephoned to his office and let them know where he was. *(Caspar shows much agitation.)* Oh, you needn't be upset about it. No one will want to make a fuss—least of all, the Minister of War. Please, Mr. Glock, I was told to tell you that Mr. Circulus and his party were coming to this Playroom of yours.

## BALLOON

GLOCK

We shall do our best to entertain Mr. Circulus and his party.

*(He knocks on the floor. Little tables laden with cakes and sweetmeats come up.)*

CASPAR

Then he'll be here! Good Heavens!

LILLIAN

Who'll be here?

CASPAR

The Minister of War. He'll be with Mr. Circulus's party.

LILLIAN

Oh, yes, he'll be here. And here is Miss Romerantz!

*(Miss Romerantz enters with the Atlantean Ambassador. Glock welcomes them solemnly, grotesquely.)*

ROMERANTZ

Perfectly charming, this—isn't it, Ambassador?

AMBASSADOR

Charming. Makes me wish I was a child again. I suppose you'll soon have to make preparations for your flight?

ROMERANTZ

So little preparation has to be made. Everything is quite ready. There will be a crowd on the Roof Garden, I believe, to see me off. Such a good night, too! Everything is complete except for one detail—I lack a partner. I have no one to make the ascent with me.

*(Mr. Circulus, Juana Fern, and the Administrator enter. Glock greets all of them solemnly, grotesquely. The Minister of War enters. Lillian goes to him.)*

LILLIAN

We meet again, Excellency.



## BALLOON

MINISTER

I admire your coolness—I really do.

LILLIAN

Doesn't Your Excellency remember seeing me somewhere else besides in the Hall of Palms?

MINISTER

I believe I do. Where was it?

LILLIAN

On a Pacific liner. I was very much taken with you. I followed you here. I tried to get a job in your office so as to be near you. But the only job they would give me would have kept me from seeing you. I typed your manuscripts in my office in the Hotel. I am Lillian the typist . . .

MINISTER

The typist . . .

LILLIAN

In this Hotel and for my own private purpose. I have another identity. Well, this is it.

*(She gives him her card.)*

MINISTER

But I know your people. Now, why did you want to . . .

LILLIAN

To kidnap you? The reason might be discovered by a psycho-analyst.

MINISTER

What can I make of that?

LILLIAN

Oh, ask a psycho-analyst.

MINISTER

Does it imply that . . . that sometimes . . . sometimes . . .

BALLOON

young women want to . . . to . . . marry the men they kidnap?

LILLIAN

Sometimes it implies something of the kind.

MINISTER

I am an unmarried man.

LILLIAN

I know it.

MINISTER

(*With fervour*) I have been a fool—a fool not to have known you before this. You have been so divinely good . . .

LILLIAN

To have kidnapped you?

MINISTER

To have taken an interest of any kind in me.  
(*She gives him her hand. He kisses it.*)

LILLIAN

There's the question of the gas-mask.

MINISTER

You know about that?

LILLIAN

Yes. Never mind how I know about it. We will make the test together. In a Balloon. We two.

MINISTER

Splendid!

LILLIAN

And now . . . Miss Romerantz.

ROMERANTZ

(*Addressing the group*) Really, I have nothing to say. I shall try to make a new record for height, and shall descend with a parachute that has a new device. Two para-

## BALLOON

chutes are now in the Balloon. But I am making the flight all by myself. No one is accompanying me.

VOICES

(*In surprise*) No one accompanying Miss Romerantz?

ROMERANTZ

No. The friend who was to have been with me has gone back on me.

JUANA FERN

Oh, then I can go with you, dear Leila?

ROMERANTZ

You! Do you really want to come?

JUANA FERN

I have always wanted to go. I mean I have such a longing to go up in a Balloon and then come down with a parachute. Won't you let me go with you, dear Leila?

ROMERANTZ

But the aviator's outfit that I have wouldn't fit you, dear Juana.

JUANA FERN

That would be too tragic. But you must let me try it on.  
(*Miss Romerantz goes into the dressing-room to get her outfit.*)

AMBASSADOR

Surely, Juana, you have no intention of going up in a Balloon to-night and then dropping down by parachute! I never heard of such a thing. What, in the devil's name, made you suggest it?

JUANA FERN

Could I help it? It was as if a cue had been given me when she said, "No one is accompanying me." I always feel the situation.

## BALLOON

AMBASSADOR

And what will happen now? When she gives you the outfit, I mean?

JUANA FERN

Oh, she won't give me the outfit. Leila Romerantz doesn't want to have a woman with her.

AMBASSADOR

Of course not, of course not. However, Juana, don't let your feeling for a situation overpower you again.

JUANA FERN

I promise that for the rest of the evening my cues will be only from one person—yourself, dear Ambassador.

AMBASSADOR

Ah, dear Juana.

GLOCK

(*Going beside Paras Veka*) Why are you weeping, Paras Veka?

PARAS VEKA

Old Papa, speak to Mr. Redvyn when you see him and tell him I will see him on the Roof Garden.

GLOCK

But why are you weeping, my child?

PARAS VEKA

Because I know that Caspar will want to go in the Balloon with Miss Romerantz. He will love her if he goes with her! He will, he will! Prince George! Caspar!

(*Miss Romerantz returns with costume on.*)

CASPAR

Here I am, Miss Romerantz! Here I am with an aviator's outfit on. May I have the hope that you will take me for your partner to-night?

## BALLOON

### ROMERANTZ

You have made yourself quite ready, I see. Oh, yes, and you are the celebrated Mr. Caspar. Yes, I will take you as my partner. Please come beside me, Mr. Caspar. It seems that they want to take a picture.

*(Caspar stands beside Miss Romerantz. All except Paras Veka and Glock form a group near them. Paras Veka goes to one of the windows. Glock strays down, becoming detached from all present.)*

### GLOCK

Ready for all sorts of flights, all of them. I won't get any of them to go with me . . . to a place where there are Sundays . . . And settings for Sundays . . . Grass, of course; cows, a bird on a bush or a briar, or whatever it might be, bells ringing over fields . . . I won't get any of them to go where there are Sundays, and where they could sit and wonder what is under the stones and listen to me as I play my mouth-organ to the children before I go back to where a fowl is roasting before the fire. These are the very people who have taken Sunday out of the week, and have taken the forenoon and afternoon out of Sunday. They have made Time tabloid—that's what they've done, and I don't know that there's any place left for me to go—I don't know that there's any place where there's Sunday. All ready for all sorts of flights, all of them!

*(Miss Romerantz makes a signal. There is a flash and an explosion from a camera.)*

### VOICES

Miss Romerantz and her partner!

## BALLOON

PARAS VEKA

(*Turning round*) I asked him. I asked him, and he would not go with me! (*She takes up aviator's outfit.*)  
(*Glock goes over to where Caspar is standing.*)

GLOCK

Signor!

CASPAR

I did not know it was so lonely!

GLOCK

What are you talking about, Signor?

CASPAR :

It is very lonely being a hero, Glock.  
(*The Scene closes.*)

### SECOND SCENE:

*The Roof Garden of the Hotel Daedalus. The scene has openness and spaciousness. Back is wall of an upper level; two ladders are against it, and the Balloon, not seen, floats from the upper level; its ropes hang down by the wall. There are guests seated and standing back; toy-balloons, held by them, are seen floating in the air. Centre, the group around Miss Romerantz is in much the same position it was in at close of previous scene. Caspar, the Administrator, Mr. Circulus, the Minister of War, and Lillian are with her.*

MR. CIRCULUS

(*To Minister of War*) Won't you say something about it?

MINISTER

Why? We don't want to make anything public yet.

LILLIAN

Hush! It's not that. I'm sure it's about the Balloon.

## BALLOON

MR. CIRCULUS

About the Balloon, you know.

ADMINISTRATOR

An historic occasion!

GUESTS

Hurrah! Huzza!

ADMINISTRATOR

A little ceremony would be appropriate, I think.

GUESTS

Hurrah! Huzza!

ADMINISTRATOR

The Minister of War has been interested in this flight since its first inception. It has been suggested that His Excellency . . .

GUESTS

Hurrah! Huzza!

ADMINISTRATOR

That he loose the last ropes of the Balloon.

*(The Minister of War makes a gesture of assent.)*

GUESTS

Hurrah! Huzza!

*(All in the group beside Miss Romerantz enter into eager consultation. Redvyn and Paras Veka are now seen at Left. Glock is standing at some distance from them.)*

REDVYN

There are islands. In the Pacific Ocean. Oh, to dive through that heavy water, you and I together, Paras Veka! We come up. We stand on the coral, and feel the air and see the sky again.

PARAS VEKA

So you talk to me! And when you talk to me so I love you!

BALLOON

And I do not even know what you have been saying to me.  
How strange this is!

REDVYN

Still you evade me, Paras Veka.

PARAS VEKA

Evade! What is it to evade?

REDVYN

I know that you will be happy if you come with me. Darling girl, I would become everything you want me to be.

PARAS VEKA

And do you think, Redvyn, I would change anything that is in you? But you—you will have to change much that is in me. I am talking like a child—just like a child. And you expect me, I know, to say wonderful things. But that's what it is to be a girl! One has one's own little ways and little thoughts, and then, all of a sudden, one should be as wise and as powerful as if one had been learning witchcraft all the time!

REDVYN

Come with me, or let me stay with you!

PARAS VEKA

Ah, but I could not give you anything!

REDVYN

Your eyes, your lips, your hair!

PARAS VEKA

But wait—wait until something, I don't know what, happens!

ADMINISTRATOR

How interesting it would be if we could have a few words from the intrepid guest who is about to accompany Miss Romerantz!



## BALLOON

GUESTS

Hurrah! Huzza!

*(Caspar is brought to the Back. He is mounted upon something. Miss Romerantz and the Minister of War stand near him. Paras Veka becomes absorbed in what is happening to him. She, Glock, and Redvyn watch what is going on.)*

GUESTS

Speech! Speech!

CASPAR

What is it to be a hero? Is a man born a hero, or does he become a hero by doing an heroic deed?

MINISTER

He is about to make a memorable statement, I feel sure. I shall have it embodied in my message to the Army.

CASPAR

A hero is one who, when an event takes place, knows it for what it is—that it is that event and no other event. He would not have it otherwise. He feels equal to the event, and, in order to be one with it, separates himself from all other things. In that act of separation the hero is made. And though nothing else has happened, that has happened. One is what one has done, and one is nothing else.  
*(But it is not what his audience has expected him to say, and there is silence.)*

ROMERANTZ

*(To Minister)* As soon as we are in the Balloon, loose the rope.

*(The Minister of War makes a gesture of assent. Then the two Newspaper Reporters who had appeared in the First Act come on.)*

## BALLOON

FIRST REPORTER

Miss Romerantz! Miss Leila Romerantz!

(*He goes to her. The Second Reporter goes to Mr. Circulus. They give their message.*)

ROMERANTZ

(*To Minister of War*) You needn't loosen the rope, Excellency. No flight to-night.

CASPAR

What is it? What has happened?

ROMERANTZ

Didn't you hear? There won't be any morning papers. The flight is postponed.

CASPAR

I don't understand . . .

REPORTER

Printer's strike.

CASPAR

But we're going up in the Balloon . . .

ROMERANTZ

No. There is no use in that.

REPORTER

You can't be on the front page.

CASPAR

But we'll have made the flight in any case. It will be noticed afterwards . . .

ROMERANTZ

The flight is postponed.

CASPAR

No, no. That must not be.

ROMERANTZ

Pardon me. It is postponed.

## BALLOON

CASPAR

(*Taking hold of Miss Romerantz*) No. We must make the ascent now. Come.

ROMERANTZ

Mr. Circulus!

(*The Newspaper Magnate takes Miss Romerantz under his protection. The Administrator who has been informed of what has happened and who is anxious to prevent a scene comes forward.*)

ADMINISTRATOR

(*To all on Roof Garden*) Miss Romerantz is not making the ascent. She is going down to the Radio Room now. We are all going with Miss Romerantz.

(*Miss Romerantz and Mr. Circulus go off together. The other guests go after them.*)

FIRST REPORTER

We know you, obscure Telescope-operator.

SECOND REPORTER

We know everything about you. We've been to the Municipal Card Index Bureau . . .

(*They crowd Caspar away from his elevation.*)

FIRST REPORTER

And we're able to place you. Listen.

SECOND REPORTER

(*Reading off a card*) "Medium height. Twenty-seven years of age . . ."

CASPAR

Is it me?

SECOND REPORTER

"Parents Unrecorded."

## BALLOON

CASPAR

Mine?

SECOND REPORTER

"Intelligence quotient, ninety-eight." There you are! Less than a hundred!

FIRST REPORTER

Now you know what you amount to.

SECOND REPORTER

Obscure Telescope-operator, you!  
(*The Reporters go off.*)

CASPAR

(*Holding the Card he has taken*) Know me! No, no, I am not in this! There is a Caspar that the Municipal Card Index Bureau knows nothing about!  
(*He goes to where Paras Veka is standing.*)

CASPAR

I have not gone up in the Balloon, but I feel that I have done more extraordinary things. I have a new past. There is a new history of myself in my mind. I am not the Caspar whom you knew. I am not the Caspar whom the authorities have a record of. The Explorer, the Adventurer, the Victor of the Elements—I am all these! You must listen to me—you must listen, Paras Veka!

PARAS VEKA

What would you say to me now?

CASPAR

If the Balloon is not for us, well, not for us the Balloon. There is the Ferry-boat.

PARAS VEKA

The Ferry-boat?

## BALLOON

CASPAR

Don't you remember that we spoke of the Ferry-boat? We will go on the Ferry-boat, Paras Veka.

PARAS VEKA

You would bring me to the Ferry-boat now that Miss Romerantz will not go with you in the Balloon. The Ferry-boat is good enough when it is with me you would go.

CASPAR

You have learnt to speak cruelly, Paras Veka.

REDVYN

It is right that Paras Veka should speak so! The daughter of the King of the Gypsies!

GLOCK

Ha! She is showing her royalty so, is she?

PARAS VEKA

You come to me thinking that I, being so humble, would take you—I, Paras Veka, the Gypsy King's daughter!

CASPAR

Paras Veka, the Gypsy King's daughter . . .

GLOCK

You shall not call her that! There was never a Gypsy King near the family. Paras Veka! She made up that name for herself when she was an infant. What could we say of that name that she gave herself except that it was a Gypsy name . . .

PARAS VEKA

The name that I gave myself!

GLOCK

And what could we say of a Gypsy child except that the Gypsy King was her father?

## BALLOON

PARAS VEKA

Oh, tell me, tell me! Is it true what I often thought, that you, Glock, are my father?

GLOCK

I, Glock, and no other.

REDVYN

Paras Veka!

PARAS VEKA

Do not speak, you, now. All the things I cherished—they were not mine—my name, my race, my history! The world that I lived in was not my world! And I am one who has nothing at all on the earth!

REDVYN

Paras Veka! Look! The sky!

PARAS VEKA

Oh, what of it?

REDVYN

The sky! See how delicately blue it is! It is like the sky of another world! See the wonderful stars in the depth of the sky! Oh, now I know why we have built such high places as these around us! It is to make us look up at the sky!

PARAS VEKA

(*Looking up*) The sky, the sky! It makes me forget that all the things that I cherished are not, and never have been, my own!

REDVYN

Come, then, with me! Come, darling girl!  
(*He takes her by the hand.*)

PARAS VEKA

Where to?

## BALLOON

REDVYN

The Balloon.

PARAS VEKA

Up and into the sky! Away in the Balloon!

REDVYN

And we shall come to a place where there are pine trees on the side of a mountain, with the snows above and the clouds making a stirless lake below us. We will live in a little house and watch old men drive flocks of goats down the slopes. You will have me! I will have you! There will be a thousand things for you to cherish there! Come with me, Paras Veka!

PARAS VEKA

*(Taking off her wrap and showing that she has on an aviator's suit)* So that is it! I was to go away with you! And so I put on the dress that that other man left on the floor of the Playroom!

REDVYN

Up into the sky and away!

*(He picks up the aviator's jacket that Caspar has cast off and puts it on himself; he brings Paras Veka to the ladder.)*

GLOCK

You must not go, Paras Veka. What will become of the company if you leave us? What will become of me, Glock?

CASPAR

And why did I see you since you are going like this? Now there is nothing left for me.

PARAS VEKA

Nothing left for you? Oh, Caspar, haven't you come to

## BALLOON

look like Prince George again? Can't you do everything that Prince George could have done? Caspar, forget me! Glock, remember me!

REDVYN

*(On the ladder, and taking her hands)* Come, Paras Veka.

PARAS VEKA

I must, since you call me.

*(Paras Veka and Redvyn go up the ladder.)*

CASPAR

*(Looking up)* They have gone into the Balloon.

GLOCK

What brought us into a place where there was a Balloon?

CASPAR

They have cut the rope!

*(Both spring up and take hold of the rope. They are lifted up. They let go and fall down. Caspar stands; Glock remains on the floor.)*

CASPAR

The Balloon sails off! They have gone up! Up! Straight up!

GLOCK

You, by your own account, are a hero. And here is where you are, and here is where we are . . . here! Look at the sign across the way!

CASPAR

What of it, Glock?

GLOCK

It says, "It pays to advertise." That sign prompts me to make some remarks. It pays advertisers to advertise. It does not pay non-advertisers to advertise. If they go into advertising all that comes back to them is distraction, and



## BALLOON

this is the point—Signor, this *is* the point: we can't come into any world that is not our own. Here we are, and this is not our world—not a bit. March!

CASPAR

Not our world—Redvyn's!

GLOCK

Redvyn wasn't able to stay in your world. He left your Telescope and came back to this Hotel.

CASPAR

And Paras Veka?

GLOCK

Paras Veka is one who carries her own world with her wherever she goes. But a Clown talks to you. He has two faces, and there is no world in which he is at home.

CASPAR

But Paras Veka?

GLOCK

Why didn't you take her, you?

CASPAR

Take her! Could I have taken her, Paras Veka, in all her wonderfulness? Could I? I might have taken her—I know I might have taken her! And now I will never go with Paras Veka along a road and pick buttercups for her—gone, gone into space! Paras Veka!

GLOCK

Will you come with me or not?

CASPAR

I will go with you, Glock, for I want you to talk to me about Paras Veka. Tell me all about her from the time when I saw her first, and before that time.

## BALLOON

GLOCK

If you will listen to me while I talk about her mother . . .

CASPAR

Her mother, Glock?

GLOCK

Yes, Paras Veka had a mother. I'll talk to you about her and about the dolls I used to make. She was more lovely than any of the dolls I made and I loved her because she was like my dolls. . . .

CASPAR

But about Paras Veka, Glock! Tell me about her from the time when I saw her with you, and she dreamed that she and I listened to the nightingales in the King's garden . . .

*(Suddenly down drops Paras Veka holding a parachute. She keeps holding it for a while.)*

GLOCK

She is back, Paras Veka! Oh, my child!

CASPAR

Will she look at me? Will she speak to me?

GLOCK

So you have come back to us, Paras Veka?

PARAS VEKA

*(Taking breath)* Yes, I have come back. Wasn't it lucky that I came down on the Roof Garden? Isn't it lucky that I found you here, found you both?

CASPAR

She is looking at me! She is speaking to me!

GLOCK

Tell us about it, my child. How did it all happen?

## BALLOON

PARAS VEKA

Oh, I'll tell you! Mr. Redvyn . . . He is, of course, the most wonderful man I ever met . . .

GLOCK

Yes, yes, yes.

PARAS VEKA

And it is so wonderful that he should have cared anything for me . . . He says wonderful things. And the sound his voice has! It just carries you up, up, up!

GLOCK

Yes, yes, yes. But how is it you got back?

PARAS VEKA

His voice is wonderful. But, you know, up in a Balloon . . .

GLOCK

What happened?

PARAS VEKA

Well, suddenly, I went deaf. I suppose it was the height we were at. I just couldn't hear a word. He was saying wonderful things to me and in that wonderful voice of his. But I couldn't hear him—not a word. And it was so empty up there—oh, so very empty! And not hearing a word!

GLOCK

There wasn't a word in that world for you, Paras Veka.

PARAS VEKA

Not a word. And so I took the parachute and dropped down.

GLOCK

Oh, la, la! And now we can leave this place.

PARAS VEKA

Oh, yes, we can leave now.

## BALLOON

GLOCK

I can leave, you can leave, he can leave. He can leave, you can leave, I can leave. We will all leave together.

PARAS VEKA

Together! Caspar too!

GLOCK

Oh, yes! He is one of us, you know.

PARAS VEKA

Caspar!

CASPAR

Look at me, Paras Veka! I am different from the Caspar whom you knew. I can look back and see the great and epoch-making things I have done. The top of Mount Everest! The bottom of the Sargasso Sea! The first aëroplane over the South Pole . . .

PARAS VEKA

You talk like that because you are in love.

CASPAR

With you, Paras Veka!

PARAS VEKA

Can that be, Prince George?

CASPAR

With you, Paras Veka!

PARAS VEKA

With me! Then tell me all that has happened to you since we met that first time. Tell me when we're on the Ferry-boat.

CASPAR

On the Ferry-boat! You have remembered the Ferry-boat?

## BALLOON

PARAS VEKA

I told you I would find you again, and I have found you.

CASPAR

Dear, dear Paras Veka!

VOICE OF THE ELEVATOR MAN

Going down!

GLOCK

Going down!

PARAS VEKA

Yes, we're going down—all going down.

CASPAR

*(Lifting up Paras Veka and running with her to the Elevator)* Yes, we're going down—all going down.

*(The Elevator opens. As they go to it a man steps out. He is Cohen Muldoon's Follower.)*

COHEN MULDOON'S FOLLOWER

This is where the Balloon flight is to be from and I'm here to see it! I'm Cohen Muldoon's friend, and I'm the champion crasher-in of the world. I've crashed into every kind of a place, every kind of a show. To crash into things you need a good nerve, and a good get-up, and a good car, sometimes. That's all that you need—absolutely all. But most of the people in the world haven't enough nerve or enough of an appearance to crash into any party. I'm ready to tell the world that everything that's going on is for the crasher-in!

*(He stands satisfied, a lighted cigar in his mouth. The Elevator goes down, the light with it, and he fades out.)*

END OF THE PLAY

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Colum, Padraic, 1881-1972.

Balloon;

